

DECEMBER, 1931

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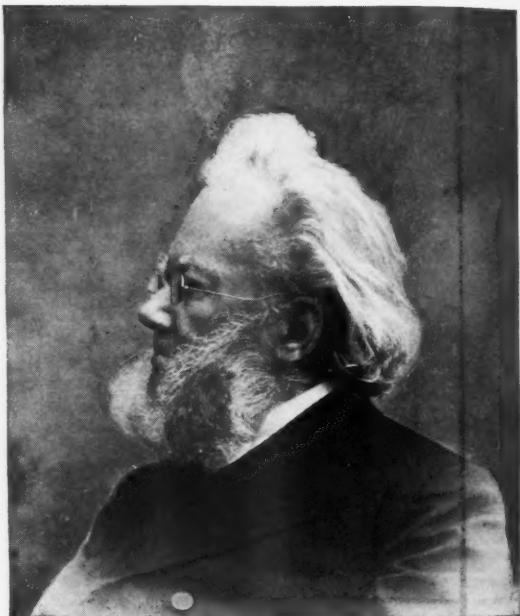
THE • AMERICAN • SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW



Resting, by Elsa Ciacelli

YULE NUMBER

The Life of
IBSEN
by
Professor
HALVDAN
KOHT



Last March we sent out a circular to our Associates announcing the publication of this work by Professor Halvdan Koht. However, for various reasons the book was not published last spring, but is just now ready.

Professor Koht is particularly well fitted to write on Ibsen. Some years ago he edited and published Ibsen's Letters. He has lectured at the University of Oslo on Ibsen.

This work contains much new and interesting material and will undoubtedly be the authoritative biography of the great dramatist for many years to come. There are sixteen illustrations in the two volumes, which are handsomely bound.

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The American-Scandinavian Review

VOLUME XIX

DECEMBER, 1931

NUMBER 12

Published by THE AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN FOUNDATION

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The painting by ELSA CIACELLI reproduced on the cover is shown in the Exhibition of the Society of Swedish Women Artists in the John Morton Memorial Building in Philadelphia.

JOHAN NORDHAGEN is dean of etchers in Norway.

SIGURD BERNHARD HUSTVEDT is professor of English in the University of California at Los Angeles.

POUL LORENZEN, chief forester, has contributed to the REVIEW articles on Danish folk dancing and on Rebild Park in Jutland.

NEILSON ABEEL is secretary of the American-Scandinavian Foundation.

JOHANNES NOREM is town judge in Kristiansand and has interested himself much in making the art of that region known in wider circles.

LYDIA WAHLSTRÖM is a writer on religious and philosophical subjects and is active in various social movements in Sweden, particularly in the woman movement.

ELISABETH KUYLENSTIerna-WENSTER is a Swedish writer of novels and short stories. "The Baron" is taken from her recent volume *Old People*.

JOHANNES BUCHHOLTZ excels in the short episodic story from the provincial life of Denmark.

FINANCIAL NOTES

HOLLAND AND THE OSLO CUSTOMS CONVENTION

Norwegian exporters, through the Consul General of Norway at Rotterdam, have inquired what effect Holland's increase in customs duties, to take effect next January, will have on the existing Oslo Convention. The increase in duties is to be from the prevailing 8 to 10 per cent. Finance Minister de Geer, when questioned in the matter, said that he was not yet prepared to state in what manner the Oslo Convention would relate itself to the higher tariff rates. It is known that there is to be very big cuts in Dutch government expenditures in almost every department.

COPENHAGEN CREDIT ASSOCIATION'S NEW DIRECTORS

The Credit Association of Property Owners in Copenhagen and vicinity has elected former Minister of the Interior O. Krag as a member of its board of directors. Dr. Krag during the past year has been a representative of the association. Another new director is Poul C. Rasmussen, who replaces H. J. Christensen, the latter having asked to be relieved of his duties. Mr. Rasmussen is a construction engineer and the president of the Society of Copenhagen Property Owners. A third member elected to the board is Carl Herforth, a well known attorney-at-law of the capital, and up to the present time the chairman of the board.

SWEDEN SHOWS NET SURPLUS INCOME FOR BUDGET YEAR

In spite of the universal depression, says the American-Swedish News Exchange, Sweden closed the budget year 1930-31 with a net surplus income of more than 2,100,000 kronor over expenditures. This surplus, it is stated, would have been considerably larger had the government not been obliged to spend 8,100,000 kronor above the original estimate, of which 4,000,000 kronor went to unemployment relief and the same amount to sugar beet growers as a needed subsidy. The government reserve fund at the end of the budget year amounted to about 75,000,000 kronor and the fund for amortization of the national debt to 63,000,000 kronor. As Sweden's national debt amounts to only 1,874,000,000 kronor, which is less than \$100 per individual, it is among the lowest in Europe.

ANGLO-NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL RELATIONS EMPHASIZED

The London correspondent of the publication *Norway* in speaking of the existing relations between financiers and banks in England and Norway, emphasized the fact that London bankers reveal a surprising knowledge of Norwegian industrial and financial affairs. Keen interest is shown especially in Norway's hydro-electric resources and the economic importance attributed to these resources. It is stated on the authority of this correspondent that per head the population of Norway is the biggest foreign buyer of British goods.

JULIUS MORITZEN

Foreign Credit Information

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*Deceased.

Christmas Greeting

At the close of a more than usually eventful twelve months the REVIEW wishes once again to bring to its readers the warmest greetings of the Christmas season. And the REVIEW, now on the threshold of its twentieth year, faces the future with courage and the determination to continue the work laid out for it as the organ of the Foundation. Courage is the lovely virtue and never was it more needed in a world harried and distracted by problems seemingly insuperable. In America we should not be downhearted; it is a fitting time to recall the difficulties and dangers faced by our ancestors of the early settlements. The founders of New England and Virginia, the pioneers of the West left all behind them to journey into a strange and forbidding land beset with many unknown terrors, but urged on by unconquerable courage and indomitable spirit. How many of you cannot remember tales told to you by your own grandparents of adventures

and perils in the winning of America. Our country is a monument to our fathers' spirit, and it is for us their sons and daughters to recall in difficult hours all that has gone before.

The Foundation seeks not only to interpret the Scandinavian lands to America, but to preserve a precious heritage of culture and intellectual freedom brought here by men of Scandinavian blood. America has need of this heritage and never so much so as now. The work of the Foundation is largely a work of spiritual values in which you are sharing and which will succeed only in proportion to the strength received from you. Let none of us therefore slacken in our tasks; let us at this Christmas time, always so full of happy omen for the future, keep courage in heart and hand, and remembering the promise that there shall be "Peace on earth; good will towards men," wish each other a Merry Christmas!

COUNTRY FOLK
Etching by Johan Nordhagen



THE AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW

VOLUME XIX

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NUMBER 12

The Ballad of Dreams

*Translated by SIGURD BERNHARD HUSTVEDT from the Norwegian "Draumkvæde"
by an Unknown Author*

I

1. *If you will hearken, I will sing
Of a young man and a strong:
The tale of Olaf Awsteson,
Who slept a sleep so long.*

2. *He laid him down on the Yuletide Eve,
And fast asleep he fell;
He woke no more till the Twelfth Night dawned,
To the sound of the matin bell.
It was young Olaf Awsteson,
Who slept a sleep so long.*

3. *Down he lies on the Yuletide Eve,
Sleeps till the matin bell rings;
Wakes as the Twelfth Night morning dawns,
And the birds shake their wings.*

4. *Woke as the Twelfth Night morning dawns,
And the sun rose over the lea;
Up and saddled his fleetest foal,
And so to the church rode he.*

5. *The priest is standing before the altar,
Chanting the holy hymns;
Olaf sits down at the door of the church,
And tells his many dreams.*

6. *The old men and the younger men
Hearken and give heed:
It is Olaf Awsteson,
Tells dreams for them to rede.
It was young Olaf Awsteson,
Who slept a sleep so long.*

II

7. *I laid me down on the Yuletide Eve,
And fast asleep I fell;
Woke as the Twelfth Night morning dawned,
Men heard the matin bell.
The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.*

8. *I have walked in the upper skies,
And down by the darkest sea;
He will not laugh with a light heart
Who seeks to follow me.*

9. *I have walked in the upper skies,
At the bottom of the sea;
He will not laugh with lightsome lips
Who dares to follow me.*

10. *I have walked in the upper skies,
Down where dark waters whelm;
I have looked at the fires of hell,
Seen part of heaven's realm.*

11. *I have traversed sacred streams,
Deep valleys I have found;
I hear the waters, I see them not,
They gurgle under the ground.*

12. *Weary I am and sore of foot,
Parched as with firebrands;*

*I hear the waters, I reach them not,
Their bed lies under the sands.*

13. *I heard no whinny from my horse,
No barking from my hound,
No song of any morning bird—
Such wonders there I found.*
14. *I lingered in that other world
Many a night and slow;
God in heaven knows how much
I saw of need and woe.*
15. *Something I learned of all things,
Of all that makes men wise;
Long was I buried beneath the mold—
Good hap to him who dies!*
*The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.*

III

16. *First of all, in my dreaming rapt,
I crossed a thorny plain;
In tatters fell my purple cloak,
My toenails dropped amain.*
*The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.*
17. *Once more, in my dreaming rapt away,
I threaded a thorny copse;
In tatters fell my purple cloak,
Each nail from its finger drops.*
18. *Then I came to the bridge of Gjoll,
Arched high over wind-swept dikes;
The bridge was laid with beaten gold,
And studded thick with spikes.*
19. *The snake stings and the dog bites,
The bull stands in my path;
Three there be on the bridge of Gjoll,
Filled with rage and wrath.*

20. *The dog bites and the snake stings,
The bull gores with his horn;
No man can pass the bridge of Gjoll
Whose oaths are falsely sworn.*

21. *I have crossed the bridge of Gjoll,
A steep bridge and roughcast;
I have waded the deep quagmires—
These too I have overpassed.*

22. *I have waded the deep quagmires,
No footfall could I trust;
I have walked the bridge of Gjoll,
Mouth filled with burial dust.*

23. *I have walked the bridge of Gjoll,
Through barbs that pierce and tear;
Heavier still were the deep quagmires—
God save him who walks there!*
The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.

IV

24. *Then I came to those waters,
Black burned the icy tide;
God gave me a thought for warning,
I turned me soon aside.*
The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.

25. *I found myself in that other world,
Knew no one in those lands,
None but my sainted godmother,
The red gold on her hands.*

26. *Some journeyed over the grim hillsides,
By dwellings on the strand,
But those who waded the pool of Gjoll
Dripping reached the land.*

27. *I turned and climbed the Milky Way,
Which rose at my right side;*

*I looked deep into Paradise,
Gleaming far and wide.*

28. *Once more I saw my godmother,
No better chance could I meet:
"Make your way to the porch of sorrows;
There stands the judgment seat."*
The moon shines,
And the roads run far and wide.

V

29. *I made my way to the pilgrims' church,
Nor knew me a living thing,
None but my own good godmother,
Wearing her red gold ring.*
In the porch of sorrows,
There stands the judgment seat.

30. *There came a pageant from the North,
Riding with might and main;
Foremost rode Grutte Greybeard,
Captain of all that train.*

31. *There came a pageant from the North,
Methought a cursed breed;
Foremost rode Grutte Greybeard,
Upon his own black steed.*

32. *There came a pageant from the South,
Methought a goodly force;
Foremost rode Grutte Greybeard,
Upon his own white horse.*

33. *There came a pageant from the South,
Riding at watch and ward;
First rode Michael, saint of all souls,
Beside Jesus Christ the Lord.*

34. *There came a pageant from the South,
Soft riding over the land;
First rode Michael, saint of all souls,
His trumpet in his hand.*

35. *It was Michael, saint of all souls,
Blew a trumpet blast:
"Now must all the souls of men
Meet judgment at the last."*

36. *Trembled then those sinful souls,
Like windblown aspen leaves;
Not one of all the souls of men,
But for his sins he grieves.*

37. *It was Michael, saint of all souls,
Each soul in the balance weighed;
Then one and one those sinful souls
To Jesus Christ he paid.
In the porch of sorrows,
There stands the judgment seat.*

VI

38. *I saw a young man walking by—
First thing my eyes could see—
He bore in his arms a little lad,
And sank in the earth to his knee.*

39. *I passed and saw another man
Wearing a cloak of lead;
His niggard soul in this world of men
To mercy had been dead.*

40. *I passed and saw still other men,
Hands heaped with earthen sparks;
God help the coveting souls that move
The woodland boundary marks.*

41. *I passed and saw those children stand
Deep in a bed of coals;
They had cursed their fathers and mothers—
God help such sinful souls.*

42. *I passed and saw the toad and snake,
Each one biting the other;
They were brothers had cursed their sisters,
The sister had cursed her brother.*

43. *I passed and saw two serpent forms,
Each biting the other's tail;
These twain were cousins of human kind,
Wedded on earth, to their bale.*

44. *I passed and came to the house of griefs,
Troll-women there abode;
They all stood churning wearily—
Their churns were filled with blood.*

45. *Hot it is in the deeps of hell,
Hotter than all earth's fire;
Into a cauldron of pitch they thrust
The broken back of a friar.
In the porch of sorrows,
There stands the judgment seat.*

VII

46. *Blessed is he in the world of men
That clothes the feet of the poor;
He need not walk barefooted
Over the thorny moor.
The tongue speaks;
Truth answers on the judgment day.*

47. *Blessed is he in the world of men,
Leads his cow to the poor man's stall;
He need not stagger with giddy steps
Over the bridge of Gjoll.*

48. *Blessed is he in the world of men
Who feeds poor folk with his bread;
He need not fear the baying hound
In the yonder world of the dead.*

49. *Blessed is he in the world of men
Who gives poor folk of his corn;
He need not fear, on the bridge of Gjoll,
To face the bull's sharp horn.*

50. *Blessed is he in the world of men,
Leaves food at the poor man's gate;*

*He need not fear, in the other world,
Mocking nor words of hate.*

51. *Blessed is he in the world of men
Who clothes the naked poor;
He need not fear, in the other world,
To tread the icebound moor.
The tongue speaks;
Truth answers on the judgment day.*

VIII

52. *The old men and the younger men
Hearkened and gave heed;
It was Olaf Awsteson,
Told dreams for them to rede.*

THE BALLAD OF DREAMS

The Ballad of Dreams is a vision poem in the form of a popular ballad. The poet is unknown, the definite time and place of composition uncertain. It is quite surely Norwegian in origin; it has been found only in Norway; it was written down from oral recitation by Norwegian ballad hunters in the nineteenth century. By reason of its similarity to other recorded medieval visions, scholars have come to the conclusion that it took shape in the thirteenth century. Preserved from that time on the lips of the people, it has passed through various traditional changes of substance and style, and so has reached us in a modified and fragmentary condition. Whatever it may have lost in the passage of the centuries, it still has retained an admirable scope and impressiveness.

Medieval vision literature, of which the poem is one of many examples, had its roots in much more ancient Christian, Jewish, and pagan apocalypses. Various currents of influence and development have been traced. The Norwegian poem has been found to have numerous European relationships. Among the more intimate of these would be the connection with the Old Icelandic *Song of the Sun*, in which a father, removed from earthly life, reveals to his son something of the world beyond the grave, particularly of God himself as the very sun of salvation. *The Ballad of Dreams* has been pronounced the finest poem produced in Norway during the Middle Ages. Moltke Moe

places it among the greatest pieces in the entire range of vision poetry, not unworthy of comparison with that most magnificent of visions, Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

From the thought of the inevitable journey of the soul after death, the medieval mind was led to the conception of a similar migration of the spirit of a man yet living, rapt away in ecstatic vision to spell some secrets of the after life and then returning to relate the story of his wanderings. Such is the case with *The Ballad of Dreams*, in which a young man is carried away in sleep and is permitted to bring back, a living man among the living, the narrative of his transcendental adventure.

For convenience of analysis, editors have arranged the poem under the following main heads: I, The framework of the vision. II, The introduction by the visionary. III, The passage to the other world. IV, The journey in the other world. V, The tentative judgment. VI, The journey in the other world (The punishment for evil deeds). VII, The reward of good deeds. VIII, The framework conclusion. Under this grouping an interpretive summary may be of service:

Young Olaf Awsteson lies down to sleep on Christmas Eve and wakes again as men are going to church on the morning after Twelfth Night. He sits down at the church door and tells his dreams. He has visited Purgatory, Hell, and Heaven. He has passed through the perils the soul must undergo in its progress beyond the gates of death. He has traversed a thorny waste. He has crossed the bridge of Gjoll, beset with nails and barbs and guarded by fearful beasts. He has made his way over forbidding quagmires. He has found his path barred by streams of fiery ice. He has seen wayfaring souls toiling over high hills and round about edifices built on the nether shores. At length he climbs the Milky Way, which to the medieval fancy was a footpath for the spirits of men, and catches a glimpse of Paradise. There he is solaced by the sight of his sainted godmother (God's sainted mother: the Virgin), who does not permit him to remain but directs his steps to the place of judgment, the porch of sorrows, the pilgrims' church. There he witnesses the splendid pageantry of the opposing hosts contending for the souls of men; the evil army led by the devil, Grutte Greybeard, and the good army led by the archangel Michael. Michael blows his trump, and the judgment proceeds, not the final judgment of the last great day, but a preliminary judgment which, to medieval thinking, followed closely upon the death of the body, a judgment which assigned the dead to preparatory states of purgation, punishment, or reward, in anticipation of the last irrevocable judgment. In a graphic series of pictures the visionary sees exemplary punishment

inflicted upon transgressors. The murderer walks about, carrying the body of his child victim. The niggardly man is bound tight in a cloak of lead. Covetous wretches who have robbed their neighbors by moving boundary stones, carry handfuls of burning earth. Those who have cursed their own kin reap the measure of their curses. Cousins who have married within the forbidden relationship suffer a hideous metamorphosis. Sorcerers who have dabbled in human blood find themselves condemned to a weary performance of the imagery of their unspeakable rites. The false cleric burns in unquenchable flames. Finally the recital concludes with the promise of grace for those who give their lives to good deeds. Those who love the truth and their fellowmen, and they alone, shall be enabled to pass all dangers beyond the bourne and reach the paths to eternal bliss. The young man has told his dreams; it remains for those who have hearkened to give heed.

Moltke Moe has written as follows of his experience on first hearing the recitation of the ballad:

"A picture rises before my mind of the circumstances under which I first heard the singing of *The Ballad of Dreams*. The scene is a peasant's cottage in a remote valley lying high in the mountains of Telemark. Autumn gusts were blowing and rains lashing the windows. An intolerable draft eddied up through cracks in the floor. On a bench by the hearth sat the aged singer herself. In a broken, trembling voice she strove to recapture from memory the wellnigh forgotten verses. As recollection returned and the spirit of the recital moved her, her tones gathered warmth and her wrinkled cheeks took on color. Her chanting assumed the solemnity of a chorale, the intensity of hymn singing, a ring of ecstatic inspiration, the tremulous overtones of bells sounding far away. It began to dawn on me how it was possible for a song such as this to have come down from mother to daughter, from father to son, through a span of seven hundred years, enriching generation after generation with its lofty vision. It seemed to me that I had been given power to look through turf and stone into a bygone era, an era of vast dimensions, of admirable simplicity and originality. The impression that emerged above all was one of dim remoteness. The venerable woman sat before me as one forgotten and left behind in the passage of the years."*

S. B. H.

*The original text of *The Ballad of Dreams*, from which the translation has been made, is to be found in Liestöl and Moe's *Norske Folkevisor*. A full discussion of the poem for itself and in its relation to medieval vision literature is available in Moltke Moe's *Samlede Skrifter*. Moe's works contain a summary in English of his article and an English rendering of the poem.



A REVIVAL OF AN OLD SWORD DANCE FROM THE EARLY FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Danish Folk Costumes

By Poul Lorenzen

MORE THAN a thousand Scandinavian folk dancers, mainly young people, assembled in Copenhagen last July for a three days' meeting. Guests from other countries joined them: from England, from Germany, Austria, and other places, and almost all the dancers wore the old colorful and beautiful folk costumes from their country or neighborhood.

The first evening a celebration was held in the Town Hall of Copenhagen in the large, handsome assembly hall which was spacious enough for all to dance at once. Never before has such a motley and gay pageant been seen in Denmark. Between the joint dances, the participants from the various countries had opportunities to show their best and most original dances to their comrades from other lands. The English Folk Dance Society danced the ancient sword dances and Morris dances, the Finns and Estonians performed their very characteristic steps and turns; the Swedes, numbering almost three hundred, swung in their gay and gracious Swedish dances, and the Norwegians gave samples of their fine, dignified art.

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GREENLANDERS DANCING IN THE STADION AT COPENHAGEN

Naturally we Danes offered our most valuable possessions in the way of both costumes and dances. A party of old peasants had come from Jutland to show an old folk minuet which is extinct and forgotten everywhere in Denmark except in their parish. It was an event to see this old dance performed so genuinely and well, by the octogenarian leader as well as the rest, and it impressed the spectators more as an act of devotion and reverence than as fun and merriment. "The Brethren of Saint Knud the Duke" performed two medieval dances, a song dance and a sword dance, both resuscitated from medieval descriptions.

But the most unusual sight was doubtless the dance of the Faroe Islanders. Probably because of the isolated situation, the medieval song dances have found a shelter on their small islands, have been preserved there until our day, and are still danced without any accompanying instrumental music. The participants join hands and sing the old ballads as an accompaniment to their dancing.

Even Greenlandic folk dances were shown. There are always a number of Greenlanders in Copenhagen, and fortunately many of them, men as well as women, were in possession of genuine and picturesque Greenlandic costumes in which they could dance their dances.

But let us return to our theme, folk costumes.

By the term "folk costumes" is understood the costumes that the common people, the peasants, wore in olden times before fashion had made us all equally bright-colored or, as far as the men are concerned, equally dull.

Our Danish folk costumes are characterized by strong, but harmonious and well blended colors without any garish anilin effects, all subject to the firm dominion and discipline of tradition. So-called national costumes, common for the whole nation, have never existed here. The garments were decidedly local, differing in the various parts of the country, often in the various parishes. Especially did the head-gear of the women vary and was often sufficient to reveal whether a woman came from one or the other of two neighboring villages.

The Danish folk costumes have resisted modern influence more or less successfully. In some parts of the country there is still a wealth of old costumes, in others practically none. It would be natural to suppose that none had been preserved near the capital but more in the remote parts of western Jutland. Quite the contrary is true. Amager and Hedebo parish, both near Copenhagen, are as rich in folk costumes as any part of the country, whereas little or nothing has been preserved in western Jutland. Not even the National Museum possesses complete folk costumes from the latter region. Why the old garments of certain regions have disappeared, is not known with certainty, and may have many different reasons. Probably the state garments could often be hoarded in more wealthy parishes, but were worn out or made over for the children in poorer places.

Nowhere in Denmark do the men wear folk costumes now. The women are still wearing their costumes in a few places, namely, on the two small islands, Fanö west of Jutland, and Læsö in the Cattegat east of Jutland, and furthermore on the fish market at Gammelstrand in Copenhagen. In Fanö



FRU MANNASIA THOMSEN, AT AGE OF
EIGHTY-THREE WEARING A COSTUME
FROM THE ISLAND OF LÆSÖ



COSTUMES FROM THE ISLAND OF FANÖ

From a Painting by Exner

some of the older women still wear their costumes, and in 1927 I saw church-going Læsø women in theirs, which are among the most beautiful in Denmark, with silver chains and other ornaments that look wonderfully distinguished and effective on the dark dresses. The picture here reproduced was taken in 1931 of my old friend from Læsø, Fru Mannasia Thomsen, eighty-three years old, who during her whole life has never worn any other dress than the folk costume. Her solid silver belt is, as far as I know, the last one privately owned in Denmark.

The silver chains and ornaments worn by married women in Læsø could not be bought on the island. So, when the young girls approached the age of wedlock, they had to sail to Jutland and walk the long way to the town of Aalborg to "fetch silver," as it was called.

It may sound strange that folk costumes are being worn in Copenhagen, the capital of the country; but the women from the fishing village Skovshoved sit on the fish market of Copenhagen every weekday throughout the year, wearing their distinctive costumes, as shown in the etching by Krause.

The folk costumes have their origin in the costumes of the higher classes. Without copying these, the peasants imitated them to a certain



WOMEN OF SHOVSHOVED BRINGING FISH TO COPENHAGEN
From an Etching by E. Krause

degree, taking from the fashions of the time what seemed attractive and possible to reproduce or buy. The fashions were simplified and changed so that every part of the country, as before said, formed its own distinctive costume which thus really became characteristic of its wearers.

The Danish women's costumes can often be traced back to the dresses from the Renaissance. In some parishes, perhaps in most, different colors were predominant for the great church holydays: blue for Christmas, green for Easter, red for Whitsuntide. Red was considered the finest color, because it was the most expensive and difficult to procure. In those days materials were dyed at home, and the coloring matter was produced from herbs and foliage, bark and moss, gathered in fields and woods. The art of dyeing with vegetable dyes has recently been resurrected in the Scandinavian countries, because these dyes hardly fade at all and possess a beautiful and warm timbre of their own which other dyes lack.

The great preference given to red was caused by the fact that no Scandinavian plant contained red coloring matter. Materials had to be dyed red by the dyer in the nearest town, or even farther away, since not every town could boast of a dyer who knew how to make this popular color.



MAN AND WOMAN FROM HIMMERLAND
IN JUTLAND

In Sweden red stockings belonging to the women's costumes are found rather frequently, but in all Denmark there has been found only one single pair. White, blue, or vari-colored stockings were usually worn, but there are indications that red stockings were at one time common even with us. In a book from 1769, *Pontoppidan's Atlas*, it is told that the women of some parts of western Jutland all wore red stockings: "When going to church they take off stockings and slippers and walk barefooted until they reach the churchyard. Here they put on their foot-gear and take it off again when starting to go home." Doubtless this was

done to save the precious footwear. But a quarter of a century later, in 1795, a description of the same part of the country tells us that the fashion of the red stockings has altogether disappeared: "Their (the women's) legs resemble neither in size nor in color those of the stork."

In some parts of western Jutland the women wore a peculiar and characteristic head-gear, a high hat. This custom has various explanations. One of them tells us that a merchant who had received a too large shipment of high hats, gave one to a girl who was known for her beauty. She wore it, and since it was becoming to her, other girls who were perhaps less beautiful did the same. Probably this is not the only time that a beautiful woman has created a fashion. Another explanation is that a ship with a cargo of high hats was stranded on the reefs near the shore and that there were enough hats for all, women and men.

In some places the women wore the so-called terraced skirts. In those days one dressed substantially. Garments were heavy, and each skirt contained many yards of material. Nevertheless, the women wore several, sometimes many skirts, one over the other. If the innermost of six or seven skirts was the longest and the others gradually diminished in length, they formed what was called a terraced skirt.

The men's costumes were mainly imitations of the fashions of the



GIRL WEARING THE HIGH HAT OF RINGKJÖBING
IN WEST JUTLAND



MAN FROM THE ISLAND OF MORS IN THE
LIMFJORD, JUTLAND

eighteenth century and consisted of coat and vest of various colors and cuts, deerskin trousers, white woolen stockings, imitating the white stockings of the cavaliers, leathern or wooden shoes. Coat, vest, and trousers were provided with metal buttons, the shoes usually with buckles. Often buttons and buckles were of solid silver, although now and then the government would issue sumptuary laws putting strict limitations on the luxury allowed in personal attire, especially that of the peasants. At times the common people were altogether forbidden to wear silver, but such decrees were never obeyed.

Like all other garments, the folk costumes have undergone changes according to the claims of fashion or times, but the evolution has been slow compared with the annual or semi-annual changes in modern dress. A costume for state occasions would last a lifetime and often be handed down through several generations. The older people were conservative, and it took them a long time to adopt new customs and fashions. When the young men began to wear vests with the back of another material than the front, this is said to have created great turmoil. The older men said of the promoters of this wild new fashion, "They show God's blessing in front, but the Lord have mercy on their backs!"

On the whole the men's costumes are of more recent origin than the women's. Yet their usual head-gear, a long, knitted, woolen stocking-cap, dates from the Middle Ages or perhaps from the ancient Phrygian cap of Asia Minor which became the symbol of liberty in the French Revolution. In a medieval fresco painting in the church of the Danish village Tuse, representing Mary bringing Jesus to School, the teacher as well as the pupils wear long stocking-caps. The Scandinavian house brownie, the Nisse, belief in whom is very old, is in many legends and tales mentioned as wearing a stocking-cap. A man's best cap would usually be red, the one commonly worn would often be of a more modest color. In parts of the country etiquette demanded that the husband wear his red cap constantly while his wife was in childbed.

Much can be said and written about folk costumes. The history of the various ribbons and their manufacturing would alone fill volumes, and in fact, volumes *have* been written about them, although not in Danish. Garters, ribbons for aprons, etc., were made at home in different ways, either braided or woven on small looms. An interesting method consisted of the so-called linking or twining. It would take too long to explain the process here, but the reader may be interested in knowing that a hair-net, apparently made in this way, has been found in a Danish burial mound from the bronze age and that this three-thousand-year-old process is still used by an old woman in Himmerland in northern Jutland who has made her garters this way all her life.

Another process is the so-called "brikking" by which the ribbon is made by pulling threads through the corners of thin square wooden plates, the so-called "briks." Doubtless this method, too, dates from antiquity and is or was known in many countries—Sweden, Norway, Caucasus, India, etc. I have learned the art of brikking from a lady who learned it many years ago from an old peasant woman in Jutland.

Neither linking nor brikking will ever be forgot-



MEDIEVAL MURAL IN TUSE CHURCH, MARY BRINGING THE CHILD JESUS TO SCHOOL



OLD WOMAN FROM OVERNAKÖ IN A
CHARACTERISTIC ROOM



GIRL FROM VALBY SELLING HER WARES
ON GAMMEL-TORV

ten, since these two ancient crafts have recently been filmed—not for the movie theaters, but for the archives of the Danish National Museum. Five hundred years from now one will still be able to learn linking or brikking from these films.

The history of folk costumes is interesting and instructive, but our knowledge of these matters is as yet very incomplete. A study of the customs connected with them and the traditions—or superstitions, if you will—attached to almost every part of the garments, is quaint and absorbing. Thus a girl who burned a hole in her apron was believed to be fated to be seduced before the year was over. If a pregnant woman was to be godmother to a child, she would put on two aprons. If a betrothed girl lost her garter, her sweetheart would desert her.

The apron was as indispensable a part of the costume as the skirt, and the part of the latter covered by the apron would often be of crash or other cheap material. Since the apron was worn constantly, a good deal of the expensive skirt material could thus be saved. The importance of the apron was probably connected with the belief in were-wolves: men who went around in the shape of wolves at night pursuing women, especially those who were pregnant. They would tear their victim to pieces and devour the heart of the unborn child, by which



FOLK COSTUME FROM THE ISLAND
OF FALSTER

More than one hundred and thirty years ago a Danish village minister wrote a book about beliefs and customs of the peasantry. In this he mentioned werewolves and called them "a kind of wolves which will be far harder to exterminate than those that devour sheep." The old minister was right. Real wolves were exterminated in Denmark more than a hundred years ago. But the author of this article knows of an admirable specimen of a werewolf who is still living and has caused much trouble to a woman who firmly believes in him and so dares not shed her apron, although she would like to wear modern dress. She solved the difficulty in a very clever manner: she is now wearing her apron *under* her dress, hidden between the latter and her petticoat. Thus she rendered unto the werewolf what belonged to the werewolf, and unto the fashion of 1931 what belonged to the fashion.

The assertion that Fanö, Læsö, and Skovshoved are the only places in Denmark where folk costumes are still worn is not quite correct. During the last years the old costumes have again attained honor and dignity, especially with the young people in the Scandinavian countries. A result of this was the above-mentioned gathering in Copenhagen of a thousand men and women dressed in folk costumes.

means the spell was broken and they would become like other men. According to tradition, a woman's best protection against werewolves was her apron, and tales from different places in Denmark tell about women attacked by werewolves but saving themselves by slapping the monster with their aprons until he would run away or help arrived. Some of the legends add that the woman afterwards noticed threads of her apron between the teeth of her husband or lover. If she would then point at him, saying, "Why, you are a werewolf!" the spell would be broken.

The belief in werewolves has been preserved until our days and is not yet quite extinct.

The better costumes that are made and worn in the Scandinavian countries in our days, are true copies of the beautiful old garments. The reproduction of these is often preceded by a lengthy and laborious study of the costume from a certain place and a certain period, after which comes the work of imitating the original as faithfully as possible. Hardly anything required for such a costume can be bought, neither material nor pattern or even dyes. One has to make one's self familiar with the old methods of vegetable dyeing; one has to roam through woods and fields in search of the right herbs and mosses for the reproduction of the warm and rich colors that are required. Then the materials are woven by hand, the stockings knitted in the right patterns, the ribbons braided, "linked" or "brikked," the bobbin-lace made, the kerchiefs embroidered, etc. The making of such a costume takes a great many hours, often years. But the labor makes this dress dearer to its owner than any other, makes it an inspiration when one wears it on joyous and festive occasions. Such a dress must be worn with reverence; but the reverence is sure to come to those who take up the study of these old costumes in earnest. They become as symbolic as the flag of one's country, speaking the strong language of memories: Thus were my parents dressed—such fine and slow work was done by the diligent hands of my grandmother and great-grandmother—such bold and unerring color combinations developed in their brains.

As before said, it requires a great deal of work to make a really good and genuine folk costume. Considering the money value of the many hours spent on this task, such a costume is worth a very high price, perhaps higher than that of the most precious dress in the fashionable shops. The fine lace on a woman's cap may alone represent a small fortune, the embroidery of a single part of a dress may take a year. But the result is a festive garment, invaluable to



A GIRL OF REFSNÆS RETURNING FROM THE MILKING



SWINGING THE GIRLS IN AN OLD FOLK DANCE KNOWN AS
Bette Mand i Knibe

its owner, a possession which one would not part with for gold. And it is good that there exists something in this world that is not for sale.

The interest in the old folk dances and the old music is closely connected with the revival of the old folk costumes—in fact, it was the renaissance of the folk dances that caused the interest in the folk costumes. In all the Northern countries—as far as I know, all over the civilized world—the desire to penetrate these fields of our ancestors' culture is steadily growing, especially among the young. In spite of all modern dances, the folk dances are undeniably danced much more today than ten or even five years ago.

The above-mentioned meeting in Copenhagen during the summer of 1931 was the ninth of its kind. The previous meetings had been held in the other Scandinavian countries and had been marked by steadily increasing attendance, radiant spirits, and good comradeship in the very best sense of this word.

The folk dances and costumes have unfailingly aroused the public's attention. When during the Copenhagen meeting the dances were performed in the open in Tivoli, the counters showed an attendance of fifty thousand people. The costumes roused more attention in the metropolis than the latest Paris fashions. Also when the dancers

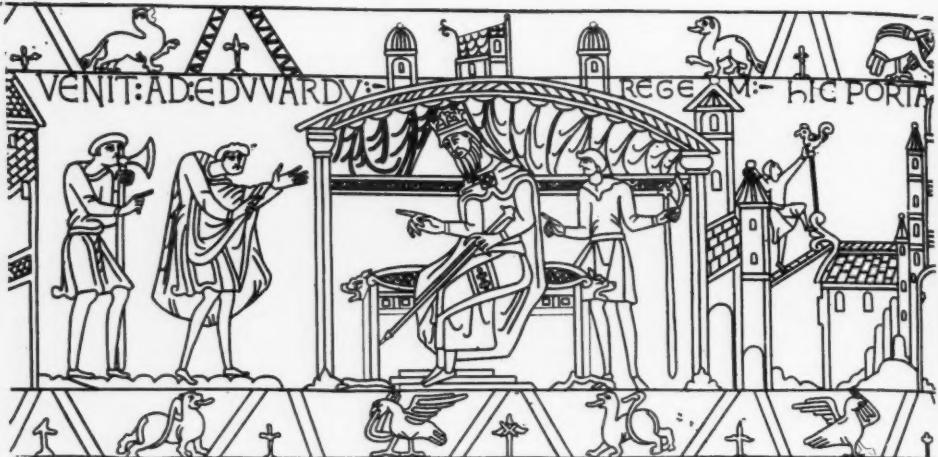
formed a procession, each country's delegation headed by its own flag and its own musicians, they were admired by thousands of spectators—and indeed, it was a pageant well worth seeing.

But let us not forget the seriousness behind the colors and festivities, the seriousness that is the backbone of it all. The preservation of the quaint, lovely dances, the precious music, the beautiful costumes, has its main significance because it forms a link between the young people and their country, with its tradition and its past. If we wish to plant a young tree, we must protect its roots. But the roots of a people are its past, its history, its folkways, developed through the ages.

The folk dances and their accessories form only a part of our Scandinavian peasant culture, but it is a part that will give value and substance to the playtime and pleasures of the young. It is one of the roads along which sons and daughters may be led back to their fathers' and mothers' farms, to their own soil. And by seeing their children meeting young people of other countries in friendship, on the grounds of tradition and native soil, many of the older generation have recovered a little of their good humor and faith in the future.



THE YOUNGEST MEMBER AT THE
FOLK DANCE MEET IN
COPENHAGEN



EDWARD THE CONFESSOR RECEIVES HAROLD GODWINSON AFTER HIS RETURN FROM NORMANDY,
WHERE HAROLD HAS SWORN FEALTY TO WILLIAM

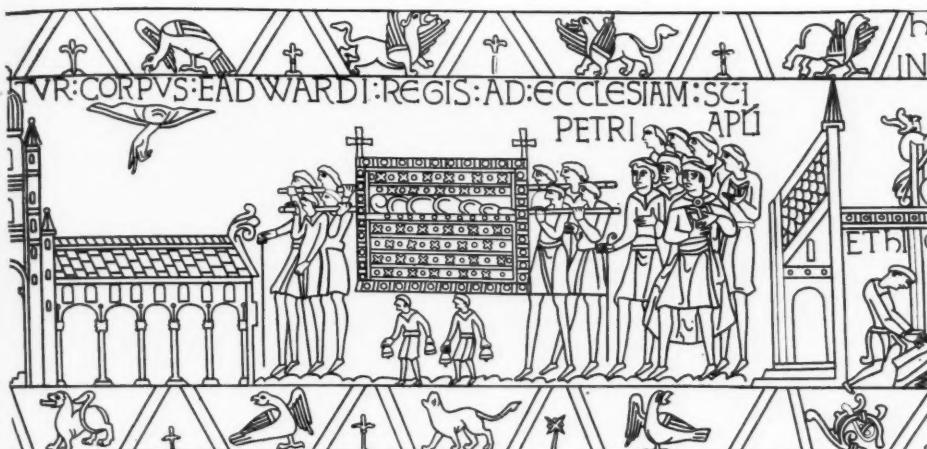
The Bayeux Tapestry

By NEILSON ABEEL.

THE TOWN of Bayeux lies on the river Aure in western Normandy a little way from Caen and near the sea. It has been the seat of a bishop since Roman times and was once a place of some importance. In the year 860 it was captured by the Norsemen under Rollo who was the great-great-great-grandfather of William the Conqueror, and it is told that Bayeux and the vicinity retained definite Norse characteristics and customs longer than any other part of the province.

Today Bayeux is a sleepy old place with half-deserted streets and—travelers will vouch for it—two of the worst inns in France. Indeed no one would go there at all if it were not for the cathedral and for the fact that in a museum is kept the Bayeux Tapestry, a unique treasure and a thing of great historical importance.

A legend which it is pleasant to believe has it that the tapestry—which is really not a tapestry at all, but a strip of embroidered linen—was worked by the Conqueror's wife, the Duchess Matilda, and her ladies, partly in Normandy and partly in England, and presented to William as a record of the Conquest and the events leading up to it. Historically, however, the legend is probably not correct, and it is much more likely that the tapestry was ordered by Bishop Odo, William's half-brother, for the decoration of the Cathedral of Bayeux and that it was executed by natives of the town.



FOLLOWING THE SCENE OF HAROLD'S RETURN, THE TAPESTRY PICTURES KING EDWARD'S BODY BEING CARRIED TO HIS GRAVE IN WESTMINSTER

Odo was one of William's trusted lieutenants and, like many of the clergy of the day, was perhaps more at home on the battlefield than in the chancel. He played an important part in the Conquest of England and would have been well able to describe its notable events to the craftsmen of Bayeux. Furthermore, some of the Bishop's followers mentioned in the Domesday Book are among the few figures named on the tapestry. While presumably it had always been the property of the cathedral chapter up to the French Revolution, it was not mentioned in the inventory of the cathedral treasures until 1476. The question of its origin is therefore still in some doubt.

The tapestry was long used to deck the Cathedral on festal days, and it is a matter for wonder that it escaped serious damage or destruction. In 1562 there was a Calvinist rising at Bayeux, and on May 12 the cathedral was entered and looted. Fortunately, during these troubles the tapestry was confided to the municipal authorities for safekeeping, and a year or so later was restored to the cathedral intact. There it lay forgotten and unnoticed for over one hundred and fifty years.

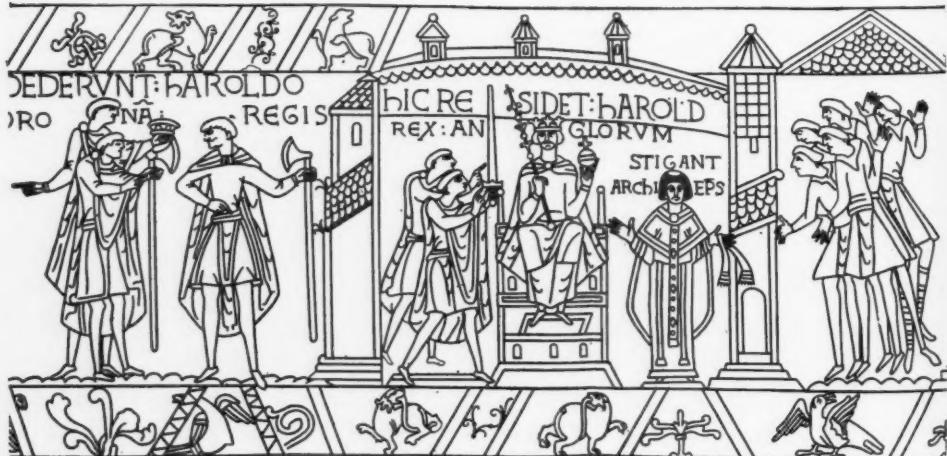
In 1724 a drawing depicting a section of the tapestry was presented to M. Lancelot, a member of the Académie des Inscriptions, who shortly afterwards read a paper on the drawing, although ignorant of what it represented. His researches at both Bayeux and Caen yielded nothing. A Benedictine father, Montfaucon, after reading Lancelot's paper wrote to the Prior of Bayeux and discovered that the original of the drawing was preserved in the cathedral. Montfaucon had the tapestry copied by a draughtsman and produced the engravings of it in the second volume of his *Monumens de la Monarchie Françoise*. The en-



THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS WHERE "ENGLISH AND FRENCH FELL AT THE SAME TIME"
SHOWING THE CONTORTED BODIES OF HORSES AND MEN

gravings were accompanied by a commentary on the figures and text. The discovery aroused considerable interest in England also, and it was described by Dr. Ducarel in his book *Anglo-Norman Antiquities* published in 1767.

The tapestry remained safely in the cathedral until 1792 and then escaped total destruction by a miracle. For it was wantonly requisitioned as a cover for a military wagon and was rescued, after the wagon had actually started, by a member of the District Revolutionary Directory, who took it to his own house. A commission of the citizens of Bayeux was formed to protect it, and it remained in their hands until 1803 when Napoleon ordered it sent to Paris for exhibition. Returned



HERE THE CROWN IS BROUGHT TO HAROLD AND LATER HE SITS IN THE CORONATION CHAIR. AT HIS LEFT STANDS ARCHBISHOP STIGANT



FOLLOWING THE PICTURE OPPOSITE, THIS CONTINUES THE BATTLE SCENE AND SHOWS THE FORCE AND RHYTHM IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE TAPESTRY

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to Bayeux in 1804, it was placed in the Hotel de Ville and unwound from a cylinder for display, a method which would surely have caused its destruction within a few years. The tapestry, however, had gradually become famous, and agitation grew for its preservation under more favorable conditions. In 1842 it was finally placed in the building which it now occupies, and its restoration was superintended by the librarian of Bayeux. He had it relined and the worsted embroidery repaired where it was worn away, using the old holes in the canvas to guide him.

Once more in 1871 the tapestry was hurriedly removed from the museum and sealed in a zinc box when the Prussians were approaching Bayeux. Since the end of the Franco-Prussian War it has been shown in a case which winds first round the exterior and then round the interior of a hollow parallelogram in a large room in the Museum, and there all may see it today.

The Bayeux Tapestry or embroidery consists of a band of linen over two hundred and thirty feet long and about twenty inches wide which has, with the passage of nearly a thousand years, turned completely brown. At a later date than that of this original strip, a border was added to it, about eight inches wide, containing no figures but only a few conventional designs. The tapestry proper is divided into seventy-two sections by other conventionalized objects. Hundreds of figures of human beings, animals, boats, buildings, and other objects are embroidered on the linen in worsteds of eight different colors. Explanations of the sections are made in Latin inscriptions, also embroidered. Perspective is disregarded excepting that objects at different distances are indicated by different colors. The historical part of the tapestry is



DETAIL OF BAYEUX TAPESTRY SHOWING THE TECHNIQUE. THE SCENE IS THAT WHERE A MESSENGER COMES TO DUKE WILLIAM IN HIS CAMP AT HASTINGS TO TELL HIM OF HAROLD'S NORTHERN CAMPAIGN

limited to the center strip, $13\frac{1}{5}$ inches in width, while the top and bottom borders contain animals and scenes from mythology. The embroidery was done with worsted strands laid flat side by side and bound at important points by cross threads. Bare arms and legs are simply outlined, while features are usually done in yellow.

Whatever the origin of the tapestry, whether it was worked in England or Normandy, by Matilda or Odo, it remains one of the great monuments of English history and with the Domesday Book one of the

great authentic records pertaining to the Conquest. In the spirited scenes depicted on it there appear Edward the Confessor, last of the English Kings, and Harold Godwineson his luckless successor. The tapestry begins with the visit of Harold to Normandy, before the death of King Edward, where he is seized by Count Guy of Ponthieu who eventually is forced to turn the English prince over to Duke William. The famous section showing Aelfgyva and the Clerk has never been definitively explained. Several sections are then devoted to an expedition in France in which William and Harold both took part and during which William knighted Harold and received his oath of fealty. This, of course, was the Norman version of the story. Harold is then shown returning to England. The deathbed and funeral of Edward the Confessor are among the most interesting sections of the tapestry and contain recognized objects still existing. The crowning of Harold is shown and then the ill-omened appearance of a strange star, identified as Halley's comet. The news of Harold's coronation reaches William, who immediately starts building a fleet and outfitting it for the invasion of England. The tapestry now follows to the inevitable conclusion. William, with Odo and Robert his brothers, crosses the Channel, lands at Pevensey, and advances to Hastings. Harold hastily summoned from Stamford Bridge where he has defeated an army of Norwegians under King Harald Haardraade, hastens south to meet William and fortifies the hill of Senlac. Leofwine and Gyrth, brothers of Harold, are killed, and finally Harold himself falls slain by an arrow in the eye. The last section shows the English army in flight.

The tapestry itself must be seen, however, to gain a full appreciation of its significance. Standing before it in Bayeux where it has been for the best part of a millennium, it is as if a wind swept over one from out of the past, bringing with it some of the martial echoes of that distant day. Edward and Harold become figures of reality, their subordinates real men in actual service. The tapestry, of course, was made for William and his triumph, and in it he looms as the central figure. He has remained one of the awe-inspiring characters of history, and it is possible that the tapestry proves that he understood the full implications of the Conquest. For the scenes depicted on it bridge two eras; at one end lies that England so long the battleground of contending Scandinavian dynasties, at the other the England which has never since been conquered by foreign foes. And on the hill of Senlac still stands the Abbey of Saint Martin of the Place of Battle, William's own memorial of his victory.

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Amaldus Nielsen, Nestor of Norwegian Art

By JOHANNES NOREM

ONE of the most popular landscapes in the National Gallery at Oslo is a painting by Amaldus Nielsen. It depicts an early morning in Ny-Hellesund, the small island outport of Kristiansand on the southern coast of Norway. This canvas not only collects a constant group of admirers in the Gallery, but it has been reproduced innumerable times and, in smaller and larger editions, hangs on the walls of countless homes throughout the land.

Morning in Ny-Hellesund deserves its popularity with the public, for it is one of the finest pieces in Norwegian landscape art. The coolness of the shadows and the brightness of the light-rays trembling over the hills and the sound, cannot but fill every responsive heart. A fisherman is rowing out, and the silent dripping of the water from his oars conveys to us a sense of the great stillness. It is poetry in the midst of everyday life, as only an artist by the grace of God can render it.

This beautiful picture was painted almost half a century ago, in 1885, but the painter is still living and, what is more remarkable, he is still painting large and excellent pictures. This Nestor of Norwegian art, who is ninety-four years old, last autumn held a retrospective exhibition in Oslo, showing with his older works many paintings of quite recent date. It was a notable occasion and roused much interest. I know of no parallel in the whole history of art except—without implying any comparison in other respects—the giant Titian who died of the pestilence ninety-nine years old while still in the midst of his work.

Amaldus Nielsen first saw the light of day in Mandal, a small town on the southern coast of Norway which is the birthplace of two other



BUST OF AMALDUS NIELSEN
By Gustav Vigeland

distinguished painters, Adolph Tidemand and Olaf Isaachsen. As a young man he was apprenticed to a decorator in Copenhagen, but soon abandoned this in order to devote himself to landscape painting. He went to the Academy of Art in Düsseldorf, where for a very short time he was a pupil of the Norwegian artist Hans Gude. From Düsseldorf he returned to Norway where ever since he has lived and painted. He found his special field in the region where he was born and especially in the islands and waterways that encircle the coast. He has rightly been called the painter of Norway's Southland.

This region wears a more idyllic aspect than other parts of Norway, but though Nielsen's work is filled with the moods of the Southland, the idyl never becomes cloyingly sweet. He paints not only the gentler notes of the landscape but also the more somber, such as the storms sweeping over the skerries, or the deep, almost oppressive autumn stillness that broods over the desolate heather-clad hills not far from the shore.

As I have said above, Nielsen made a hurried trip to Düsseldorf, but it would seem that the school of art which dominated Norwegian painting from 1850 to 1880 left almost no traces in his work. From the time he returned to Norway he has gone to school to the greatest of all masters, Nature herself. In consequence of this he occupies an almost unique position in Norwegian art—he stands alone, isolated, and is like no one else. He was our first naturalist, years before Naturalism made its formal entry into Norwegian art.

Norway is a poor land, as it lies there in the far north under the eternal snows, but in one respect it is richer than most other countries: its scenic beauty is deservedly famous all over the world. In this fame, however, the Southland has shared but little, and it is only a few decades ago that even Norwegians themselves became conscious of its charms. That it has now won the high place which is its due, is owing to its artists, first and foremost to the poet Vilhelm Krag and the painter Amaldus Nielsen.

Paintings photographed by O. Väring

MORNING AT NY-HELESBUND
By Arnoldus Nielsen

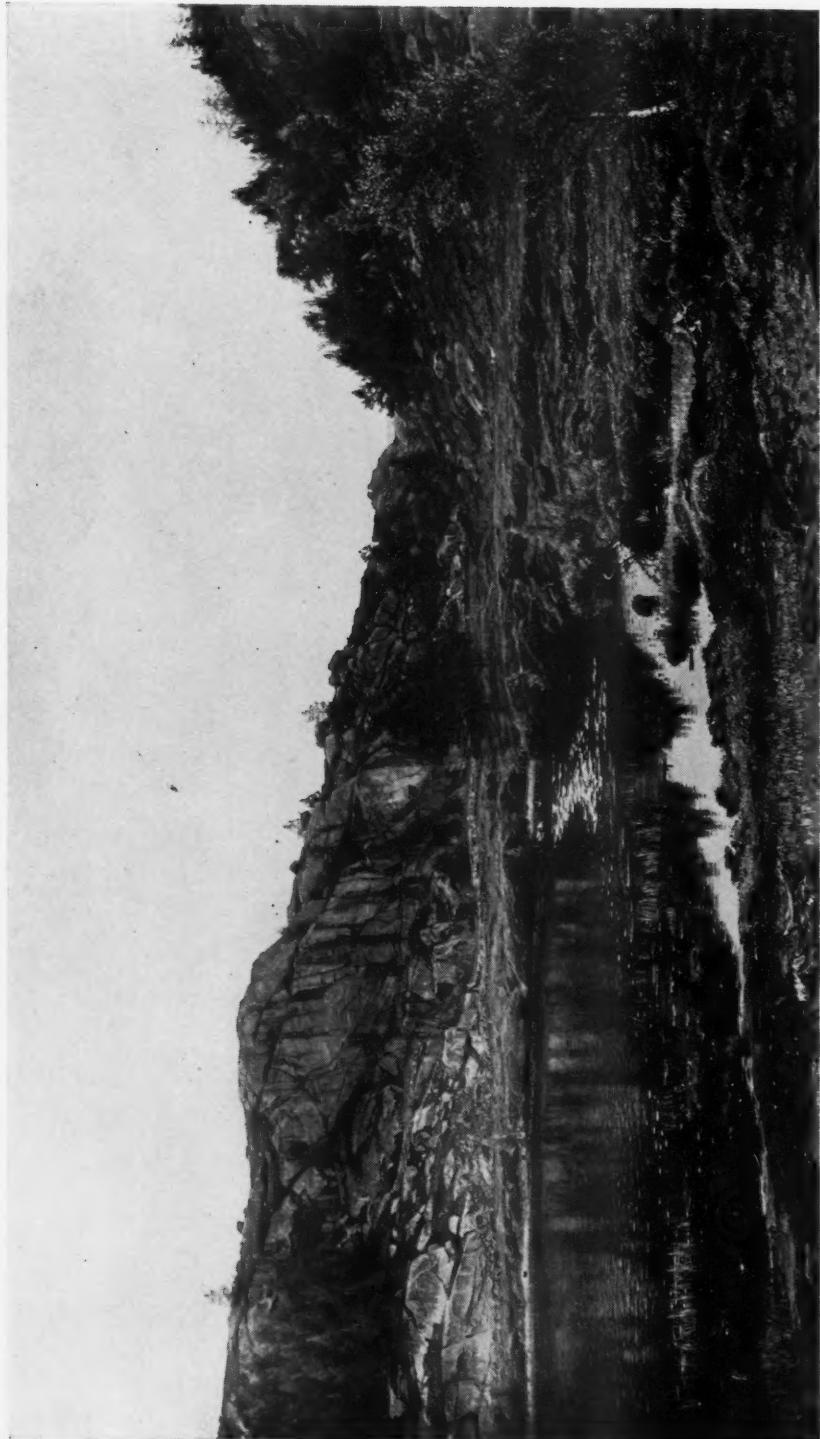


MORNING AT NY-HELLESUND
By Amaldus Nielsen



EVENING AT HVALÖRNE
By Amaldus Nielsen

A LONELY Moon
By Amaldaus Nielsen



A LONELY Moor
By Amaldus Nielsen



COUNTRY ROAD NEAR MANDAL.
By Amaldus Nielsen

A Queen's Cavalier

By LYDIA WAHLSTRÖM

As the friend of Marie Antoinette and the most prominent Swede in the American Revolution, Count Axel von Fersen has always been invested with a peculiar glamour. No ordinary interest attaches therefore to the three volumes of his journal, ably edited with commentaries by Alma Söderhjelm, even though we must admit that the hero emerges a little shorn of his glamour. On the basis of the new material thus brought to light, Lydia Wahlström has sketched for the REVIEW the figure of the "Queen's Cavalier," Fersen.*

THE STORY is told of a mother who wished her daughter's teachers to instruct her in "the history that is used in conversation." Presumably she meant the sort of thing the ladies' journals, as a matter of choice as well as duty, serve their feminine readers:

romance from Cleopatra to Mary Stuart. Axel von Fersen the Younger, the tragic hero in Marie Antoinette's drama, could surely not be omitted from such a group of the romantic figures of history.

Although Swedish by birth, Fersen was at one time Colonel of the French regiment known as the Royal Suédois and participated, on the side of the French, in the American Revolution. Later his destiny became more and more closely bound up with the French court. It was he who sought to rescue the King and Queen after the outbreak of



AXEL VON FERSEN
Painting by Karl von Breda

*The Löfstad, at which several of the pictures here reproduced are found, is one of the estates of the Fersen family, mentioned in Fersen's journal. It remained the property of the descendants of Fersen's sister, Sophie Piper, until 1927, when it was willed by Fröken Emilie Piper to the Swedish Knights and Nobility.



MARIE ANTOINETTE
Miniature, at Löfstad

up his abode as a high court official in his native land. Here, in 1810, he finally met a fate if possible more tragic than that which overtook his royal mistress.

Axel von Fersen was born in 1755, just when his father, the nobleman and royal counsellor of the same name, was beginning his brilliant political career. Being a man of unusual intelligence, schooled as a French courtier and officer, the father tried to give his son the same education as he had enjoyed, and spent on him years of study and foreign travel, only to be forced at last to admit that there was not much to show for the 300,000 francs he had expended. To a casual observer the son's career might look just as brilliant as his father's. When only twenty-three years old, he attracted attention at the French court for his handsome appearance and his gallant and dignified bearing and not least because of the Queen's undisguised love for him.

the Revolution by the flight to Varennes, and subsequently acted as intermediary between them and the Swedish government. His devotion first to the French Queen and later to her memory has stirred emotion and admiration in generations of men and women alike, and shed on his personality a glow of historical importance. Yet little has been known of the latter part of Fersen's life, which he spent in voluntary exile in Belgium, Germany, and Austria until 1799, when he took



AXEL VON FERSEN AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN
Pastel by G. Lundberg, at Löfstad



SURRENDER OF LORD CORNWALLIS, OCTOBER 19, 1781. FROM THE PAINTING BY COLONEL JOHN TRUMBULL. THE EIGHTH FIGURE FROM THE LEFT IS FERSEN

And later, when he accompanied the French auxiliary forces as Rochambeau's aide-de-camp to the American Revolution 1780-83, he distinguished himself there for his bravery, and on his return was deemed worthy of the same regiment his father once had commanded; he was allowed to buy his commission, at the Queen's request to his father.

If Fersen perchance went to America in order to escape the dangerous liaison with the Queen, the flight was of little avail, for on his return to Paris he was more ensnared than ever. In January 1786 he sent his sister, Sophie Piper, who became his only confidante in this matter, a lock of Marie Antoinette's hair from herself and wrote therewith: "Never have I been so loved." The expression is significant, for he was not of a warm nature; his relation to women seems usually to have consisted in letting himself be loved. Alma Söderhjelm, professor of history at the Swedish University in Åbo, who has edited his journals from 1791-99 with a commentary, and who on the whole is favorably disposed toward Fersen, is forced to admit that he possesses little scope and imagination, that he "appraises a lady more for the way in which she wears her evening gown than for her manifestation of human feeling. He is not a warm-hearted person; he does not love deeply. In vain one seeks his true nature behind his words."

Fersen now felt like a real Frenchman, and although, of course, he had to go home when war broke out between Sweden and Russia in 1788, he was again sent to Paris early in 1789, when a revolution was expected in France; and soon he was commissioned to carry on negotiations privately on behalf of the Swedish King with the King and Queen of France, whom Gustavus III wished to help in the midst of these difficulties. Hereafter he spent all his time as factotum, private secretary, courier, and letter-carrier to the royal family. All letters which Louis XVI and his spouse sent to foreign courts asking for assistance were either

composed or read through by him. Here Fersen reached the height of his career; here he risked everything to help the only woman he ever loved. But he did not need to sacrifice his views for his love; he was throughout the conservative *grand seigneur*, without the slightest understanding of any justification for the ideas of the Revolution. He was therefore entirely true to his convictions when he conducted the royal attempt to flee to Belgium. It was he who bought the heavy *berline*, lifted the little Princess into the coach, and himself acted as coachman the first stretch of the journey, after which he hurried on to Belgian territory, where at the command of Gustavus III he was to make all preparations for the arrival of the King and Queen. The Swedish King, who was at Aix-la-Chapelle bathing in order to be nearer the center of action, paced the roadway, watch in hand, waiting impatiently for the coach, but it never arrived. Near the border the ill-fated King and Queen had been discovered and brought back to Paris, first to a sort of imprisonment with some maintenance of dignity, and finally to trial and death.

After the unsuccessful flight to Varennes Fersen took up his so-



MARIE ANTOINETTE
Oil Painting by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Exhibited
at the Salon, 1783

A PAGE FROM FERSEN'S JOURNAL WITH THE END OF A LETTER FROM
MARIE ANTOINETTE

a few days, during which time, with the gravest danger for his life, he managed to meet the King and Queen and even had a couple of secret meetings with the Queen. "I went to Her," he writes, "came in the usual way, was dreadfully afraid of the National Guards. She lives very comfortably. Didn't see the King."

It is not strange that Fersen was afraid; discovery would have cost him his life and his Queen what reputation she had left in France. But the journey was undertaken for the possibility of rescuing the royal family, and the new plan for flight failed only because of the King's customary inertia. With this secret visit to Paris, Fersen's political importance came to an end. Hereafter this thirty-six-year-old man lived mostly on memories of what had been, and it seems as though his nervous energy had been completely spent by the tension under which he had lived so long. Louis XVI's apathy, the selfishness of his relatives, and the indifference of the emigrants left Fersen no illusions regarding the future. The death of Gustavus III in March 1792 robbed him of any political pretext for remaining in Belgium; for the Queen's rescue he could do nothing, and his aged dying father insisted more and more strongly on his return home. He had of course lost his officer's commission through the Revolution. But Sweden held no attraction for him, and except for the time from October 1794 to July 1795, when he sojourned at the Swedish court to find out what opportunity there was for a post as foreign ambassador, he spent the time till 1797 either in idleness or flight watching the progress of the allied forces against France, where he, if anybody, should have held a prominent position as officer. His activity was limited to more and more fruitless efforts to drive others to action, but from the many conversations with former French and Austrian ministers which his journal records, one can scarcely glean anything which resembles serious diplomatic work. The reader finally waxes impatient with this man who sits inert, unable to shake off his neurasthenia, complaining of his poor health, his loneliness, and his ruined finances—all the while seeking to help the emigrants by buying their valuables, though he himself is living on borrowed money.

Worst of all, his illness seems to have been only an excuse for continuing a mode of life in which he degraded himself earlier, during his connection with Marie Antoinette, and which must have contributed toward embittering the last hours of the unhappy Queen. Alma Söderhjelm is the first to disclose Fersen's long liaison with an Italian adventuress, Eleanore Sullivan, who had been married to an Irishman, but now was maintained by the above mentioned Craufurd, whose legitimate wife she finally became in 1802. The relation with Eleanore

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MARIE ANTOINETTE
Painting by the Swedish Artist, Alexander Roslin

was a sort of substitute for the home life and the care which Fersen never could hope to enjoy from the Queen, and it began at the same time as the preparations for the flight of the royal family. "We became acquainted at the most interesting moment in my life," he writes. He continued the affair until 1798 with a fidelity which would have been worthy of a better cause, at the very time when he gave way to despair over the Queen's fate and his own future. He was in turn attracted and repelled by Eleanore, this inferior woman, who was at the same time the Queen's rival for Fersen's love and his helper in

the attempt to save her. It was principally for the purpose of binding her to him that he tried to collect the sum of 1,500,000 francs willed to him by the French royal couple as compensation for the money which he had procured for them on his own note from a firm in Paris to make possible the flight to Varennes. These unsuccessful financial operations provided Fersen with a new pretext for remaining in this degradation; although he well knew that Eleanore, who was kind-hearted enough to nurse him like an ailing child, did not love him enough to give up Craufurd's millions in favor of cold and "poverty" in Sweden—that is to say, the estates of Ljung, Mälsåker, and Steninge. . . . It is evident that Fersen's love life was of the kind which psychoanalysis calls infantile. It is significant that he gives a similar interpretation to the inclinations of young Gustavus IV Adolphus: "He needs an older woman who can be a companion to him."

When the desired and feared breach with Eleanore finally came in 1799 and Fersen returned to Sweden for good, his melancholy was incurable. "The contrast between the external glamour of his life and its deep inner inadequacy makes him a romantic personality," is Alma Söderhjelm's pointed comment. But despite all his romance he was very unpopular with his Swedish contemporaries because of his repellent hauteur.

The end of this ill-fated man's life was just as tragic as that of the Queen he had loved. When Sweden's newly elected Crown Prince, the highly esteemed Karl August, died suddenly in 1810, there was circulated in Stockholm the rumor that he had been poisoned by those who advocated the succession of Gustavus IV Adolphus' young son. Since it was known that the Royal Chancellor Fersen was a "Gustavian," the mob of Stockholm took revenge on him for the crime he had never committed. He was torn from his carriage in the funeral procession and beaten to death while the troops and the police looked on, June 20, 1810.

To posterity Fersen's circumstantial and carefully kept journal appears his most significant work. The journal is appealingly honest, without all the pose which seemed almost indispensable in that era of declamation. Besides making many important contributions to the history of the time, it unveils his innermost being in all its tragedy: that of a man who had strained beyond his strength to accomplish the great mission of his life, and now only drifted with the current, a middle-aged man shrinking from all responsibility, a man without a country, without a purpose in life, and without religious aspirations.

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The Baron

By ELISABETH KUYLENSTIerna-WENSTER

Translated from the Swedish by HOLGER LUNDBERGH

VIERTUE, Gossip, and Slander were having a gay party. It might seem incongruous to find Virtue in so dubitable a company, but that noble lady probably realized that the ugliness of the other two accentuated her own flawless beauty. The three celebrated dames did not meet very often, because in the community where they lived Good Nature and Indulgence usually contrived to sidetrack the subjects which would have made perfect topics for an animated conversation. And, of course, they did not wish to remain silent. But today the occasion was a very special one.

"Yes," said Virtue, spreading out her dark, full garments, "it is an outrage that a man as old as he is not more careful about his reputation."

Virtue ceased speaking. She knew that she impressed without having to chatter. But Gossip, whose mouth resembled a door banging in the wind, never quite shut, hurried to interject, "They say that his daughter and son-in-law will appoint a guardian for the old man any day now, and sell the house. It will be auctioned off, and—"

Slander, who always allowed herself time to sharpen her comments between thin lips so that each word became as pointed as a needle, interrupted in her rasping voice which reminded one of the jarring hum in a telephone receiver.

"It is a question whether he will be put away, in an institution. He is quite irresponsible, you know, having squandered a whole fortune on the lowest pleasures, veritable debauches."

"Scandal, scandal," chimed in Gossip, highly pleased.

But Virtue spread her ample gown still wider about her and said in a voice

which since the beginning of time has had the same inflexible tone: "It is awful for a man to remain the same Don Juan, even in his declining days. To play with love is a blasphemy." Her cool, quiet eyes looked straight ahead.

"Tee-hee," giggled Gossip. "The old baron has blasphemed a lot in his day. I remember when he married. The whole town had turned out to get a glimpse of the elegant society wedding. The bride looked very pretty, surrounded by her ten bridesmaids in yellow gowns. But there was nobody who believed that the baron was in love with her."

"I know," said Slander, quickly. "He was taken off his guard. They had both ridden with the St. Hubert hunt, and during the dinner afterward the champagne had such an effect on Oscar-Fredrik that he said a lot of beautiful things which he did not mean, but which she remembered. And the next day her father, the mayor, came and read him the riot act."

"The girl refused to be a plaything," said Virtue in a ringing voice. "She had accepted a kiss."

"One!" cried Gossip, and her tone implied that according to her memory the number was considerably greater.

"They married," said Slander. "We won't go into that. Nobody remembers the details now, unless I should bring them up again, which is very tempting, now that we are discussing the baron."

Virtue gave her a look of stern reproof. "Don't," she said. "The baroness was a good woman. Not a dustcloth was lost while she lived, and she kept order among his books—which he drags all over the house—and among his instruments and volumes of music. She was domestic,

not very complex. As far as I know, horseback riding was her only passion, and she could manage a horse."

"Yes, I remember it well," Gossip rattled on. "And every time they went riding, that unmated married couple, the baron became sentimental and half fell in love with her, and she thought that he was hers at last. But then they got home, and she began to nag him about his carelessness and his violin playing and his card parties, in a word, about everything he did, and he cursed and wished that there had never been a St. Hubert hunt."

"She is dead," Virtue spoke in a soft voice, "returned to dust. Unfortunately she is also forgotten."

"Yes," Gossip sounded quite elated, "and since then the baron has had his fling—in his way. Dear me, how he has pranced and capered in the torchlight dance of love! And the sparks have struck garret windows and fallen in backyards. Or I should perhaps first mention those of his own class, the countesses, the baronesses, and the débutantes whom he has looked at with an appreciating eye. Eros has never in vain asked him to run errands for him. There are a number of amusing stories."

Again the metallic voice of Virtue was heard. "I knew Oscar-Fredrik's great-grandfather. He, too, walked the broad way. Amor, Bacchus, and Phryne have since many years had their headquarters in that beautiful house, which looks like a giant bouquet when the garden is in flower."

Slander had for some time impatiently tapped the floor, anxious to interrupt. Now she discharged a poisoned projectile. "The old man is supposed to be both a liar and a cheat. He has been sitting there, in the fragrant bouquet, if I may use the poetic expression, toasting his cronies and forcing fathers of families when in their cups to write their names on drafts. The next day—but don't quote me—he has courted their wives, bought flowers with borrowed money, invited

them to drives, and presented them with costly jewelry."

Gossip looked somewhat askance at Slander. It was not fair play to exaggerate in this manner. It was a little too much. Nobody in this town believed you if you were too mean. Virtue was really the most appreciated, although Gossip could not complain on her own part. Slander, however, should be careful. Baron Oscar-Fredrik belonged in the physiognomy of the town, as had his ancestors in the white Renaissance house. It used to lie outside the town limits, but the place had grown fast in one generation, and now a new street went past the garden wall. Gossip knew that little boys stole fruit in the autumn, and she also knew that the baron himself cut the long-stemmed roses which he named for those who were to receive the lovely flowers. The La France, that cool pale red, easily perishable and nearly odorless, he called Little Gunhild. She was the girl in the music store. Ever since her seventeenth birthday she had been presented with a bunch of La France roses as soon as they were in bloom. It was only the first roses that received these charming names—the baron was faithful in his fashion. If later he cut more flowers from the same bushes they were given temporary names. It might be that Miss von Hüttner, one of his oldest lady friends, had to be satisfied with a few Pimpinella roses, whereas young Mrs. Holm, formerly of the stage, was honored with a bouquet of the most magnificent Reine Marie Henriette. But he never quite forgot any of the old ladies who had been society belles to his *jeunesse dorée*. The garden was not large, and there were not many kinds of remontant roses, but it seemed that everything the baron owned and squandered possessed a golden, fabulous aura; it grew and expanded, even without the connivance of Gossip.

Slander had been conversing a little aside with Virtue, who had stirred uneasily. Now said Dame Virtue: "I don't deny

that he deserves his punishment, and I have long since turned my back on him, but it is revolting to me to be tainted with salacious stories. I shall go about my pure tasks."

The other two would soon get enough of each other's company, because they both dabbled in the same profession, and it happened that Gossip felt outdone by her more temperamental sister. Her superciliousness was humiliating, but nobody could deny that her wit was keener.

"I am in a bit of a hurry," said Gossip. "There are a lot of people—can you imagine it?—who have no idea how badly off the baron is. Originally it was a large fortune. Many unsuspecting individuals believe that he is still solvent. His 'charming Camilla,' for instance, she is so naïve that it is simply laughable."

"Oh, yes, *she*," said Slander, her cheeks glowing, "she lives a strange existence. Not a penny to her name, which does not keep her from arranging the most delicious little dinners and dressing exceptionally well. Isn't her daughter in England? And her son at the university? Where does she get her money from?"

"She is an old flame of the baron—I mean, one of the best," said Virtue. "I don't think that we should criticize the attachment."

Slander shrugged her shoulders, but Gossip could not be satisfied with a mute gesture. "Nevertheless," she said in a triumphant tone, "it was a draft with the baron's name, which Camilla's son could not get any bank to accept, that opened the eyes of his daughter and son-in-law. *Corpus delicti* is said to take the matter calmly," she added hesitatingly.

This was something which the three ladies hardly were interested in, and they went their ways, Virtue dignified and a little heavy-footed, Gossip almost dancing, Slander padding on quiet soles.

It was midsummer, and the town would have lain somnolent, basking in the

generous sun, had not this matter with Baron Oscar-Fredrik occurred. So far, only those on the inside knew anything definite, but everybody sensed that all was not as it should be.

Gunhild, the girl in the music store, who would soon go on her vacation, looked crestfallen and thoughtful. All during the long, monotonous year she dreamed of this one month when she could leave the little town and in Dresden enjoy the great orchestras and the soloists who possessed the divine gift of genius. For ten years she had gone to Dresden, but she knew that she had traveled on borrowed money. It was really reckless of her, for how would she ever be able to pay back the loan? Her salary was small, and she had old and poor parents to support. It was impossible to save anything.

Gunhild had never before looked as if the obligation weighed heavily on her. She had been beautiful and much feted. That was before her father—once a jovial fellow who used to be the life of every party—became desperately ill, and the jolly home turned mute and sad. Instead of becoming a concert singer, as she had hoped, she had been forced to accept gratefully the position offered in the music store. Her lovely complexion, once the enchanting hue of roses, had paled; her dark eyes, often compared to black diamonds, had lost their shining light, except when her vacation approached. At that time the roses bloomed again in her cheeks, and the beautiful Gunhild of yore seemed to return.

Baron Oscar-Fredrik, who literally and figuratively played first fiddle in the town's exclusive F.M.—Friends of Music—society, often came to the store and asked Gunhild to order music for him. He scorned the pieces enjoyed by the townspeople.

He had first met Gunhild in other surroundings, had helped celebrate her birthdays, written high-sounding poetry to her, and offered her the La France roses.

The flowers were still forthcoming every birthday, and inasmuch as Gunhild's birthdays occurred toward the end of June, when the weather was warm and fine, it happened that if the baron had nothing else to do he invited the girl and her parents for a drive. But that was something that you could not depend on. He might or might not repeat the invitation, for the baron did not like to make sacrifices. He could bark at a beggar who smelled badly and curse the "odor" so that the air became laden with sulphuric fumes from his blasphemies.

But he could, too, of a late evening, after he had executed or listened to some good music and perhaps had enjoyed royal good luck at the card table, while walking home along moonlit streets in the town he loved, for the sheer pleasure of being alive, take out an unsolicited handful of coins from his pocket and throw it at some lonesome, shivering individual, especially if he knew that it was a derelict. To people of this kind he showed pity, not because his heart was sentimental, but because he believed that they were the last notes in a melody, the lees in a glass of noble wine, that perhaps the cruel Polypheme of fate had invented some ugly trick, just as they were steering toward the Ithaca of their dreams. If that was the case, Oscar-Fredrik's eternal imagination reached them a hand.

In a way the baron was an uncrowned monarch. He was welcome wherever reigned spirited fun, Homeric laughter, extravagance in food and drink, fine manners, and the happy vitality of the moment. He was noble more in his outer than his inner man. Never had he pursued anything really serious or worth while. "Don't stand in the way of the drudges," was his motto. "They are having the devil's own time, anyway."

How did he pass his time? His contemporaries, who should have taken their ease, complained that the days were so long. It pained them that life put no

heavier obligations on them than to leave their place gracefully to a younger generation. "By Jove," he said and scratched his Vandyke beard, "it is only lack of enterprise that makes people whine about the stagnation of old age. I live as I have always lived, and the day is not long enough for me to play through the whole symphony."

"You are wealthy," somebody might interrupt. "That makes all the difference in the world. And your only child has more than she needs of worldly goods. You don't have to deprive yourself of anything for her sake, or for the sake of your grandchildren."

"I'd never think of such a thing," said the baron and made his favorite gesture, a grand sweep with his left hand. "Gabrielle is a thousand times more clever than I. She does not revere me, neither does she love me. The reason, perhaps, is that we have never needed each other. We find it best to live a day's journey apart. Every time I become five years older, my daughter and son-in-law do me the honor to manifest this with their presence. Sometimes they bring well trained offspring with them. We embrace and utter words designed to bring tears to weak eyes and cause shrunken hearts to tremble like autumn leaves."

Yes, that was the way it used to be, but how was it now?

The city fathers and other older gentlemen, who used to join the baron with a cup of coffee and a glass of punch in the Sans Souci summer restaurant, had developed thoughtful wrinkles in their foreheads, and the corners of their mouths showed tendencies to droop as if under the influence of disagreeable speculations. They did not know what their honored friend, the baron, was up to. He hummed, as before, during other summers, *Här är gudagott att vara*, and *Ulla, min Ulla*, and observed his fellow townspeople with interest. And yet he must have been aware of the fact that the banks no longer considered him solvent. In a word, his name

meant nothing. He had become enmeshed in a net, and people expected the son-in-law to step in at any moment. The baron had long enough enjoyed his liberty to mismanage the capital. There was still something to be saved, and that must be saved. It would be necessary to deal sternly with a fellow who poured out money as his whims dictated. At least, that is what his son-in-law, a most important man, had said. Bankruptcy! Scandal! The town became breathless with excitement.

One day, shortly before the hour for calling, the baron stood among the roses in his garden. He had pushed the panama hat back so that it gave the impression of a halo around his head. While he lovingly cut the long-stemmed, warmly dark red Prince Camille de Rohans, he hummed, "Alas, that the season of roses is short." It was the voice of an old man, but the expression was that of a *viveur*, eternally young. He had placed nine flawless roses on the grass, and he felt satisfied. He picked them up carefully and held them caressingly against his green hunting jacket, a faithful old garment that he had worn in many adventurous hunts.

The letter-carrier and the baron reached the stairway simultaneously. It was a round stairway of granite, projecting from the low, white building with its mansard roof.

"Morning, Eriksson. The mail must go through, though I suppose it is a chore in this heat."

"You receive a lot of mail these days, baron," said Eriksson, and hid his face by bending over, searching in the bag.

"Yes, I do. Damned disagreeable messages, if you must know. Not even the anonymous letters have any pep. Tell me, Eriksson, you were born here, like me, weren't you? And you love the town, I suppose, or else the devil take you. Well, where has the romance gone to?"

"Romance?"

"Yes, the soft, waltz-time romance, that in the evenings used to dance its way straight into the heart of the old town. It's lost."

"Is that so? Well, personally I think that everything is the same. Here you are, letters of all sorts." Eriksson saluted, but perhaps not quite so respectfully as two months ago.

Baron Oscar-Fredrik made a face, both at the stack of mail and at Eriksson. A shadow crossed his face. "Thanks," he said curtly, but he suddenly added with the grin of an urchin, "Do you want a real Havana cigar, Eriksson? A genuine Upmann, eh?"

The letter-carrier's honest face plainly mirrored his thoughts—surprise, disapproval, condescension, and delight. He said, politely, "Thank you, baron, but that's a cigar for fine gentlemen."

The baron waved his hand impatiently, and called for Gustava. She appeared, white-haired like her master, but broader all around. Yes, she knew where to find the box. "Is—is that what you want?"

"Exactly, Gustava. And take these miserable letters with you."

When the baron had changed clothes and entered his study, where the letters reposed on the open secretary, he saw at once that Gustava had arranged them. On the top of the heap lay a couple of invitations. Then some letters asking for money. Atrocious handwriting! And—awful perfume! No, the little ladies had better apply elsewhere. And below these, all the bombshells, the vulgar bank envelopes and the labored style of the anonymous writers. Who could be so idiotic as to believe that he would waste even a few minutes on this trash? He let his eyes skip over the first line, swore, and threw the letter away. Had they no shame, trying to lord him in this fashion?—threaten him, poke their noses into his private life. Impudent hyenas! All those people whom he had never cared to look at when they had come to whine and beg. It would never have occurred to him

to give a penny to a woman lacking in charm.

It was an entirely different matter when little Fanny Holm made herself sweet and offered him a kiss—on the cheek. She did not want to give and he did not want to receive more intimate caresses. Fanny could have been his granddaughter. But when she desired something with her entire and incurably frivolous soul—something her husband could not afford to give her, and which she therefore wheedled out of this cavalier of the ladies—she was a revelation for a connoisseur. And there was Camilla, his lovable Camilla. If he was Boccaccio, she was "Fiametta." He would adore her to his dying day. Nobody but he perceived that she was still beautiful, that her eyes, which had wept much, still shone and sparkled—not for him—that they had scarcely done at any time—but in gratitude for all the help he had given her and the children. She had mourned her husband bitterly, but, thank the Lord, her soul was not one of those that remain forever sorrowful. Like him, she loved life.

They had had many memorable moments together, not alone, but in the jolly company of congenial friends. She could arrange the most delightful little parties. Sometimes she refused to take his money. "I can't," she would say, and then he satisfied her pride by accepting a promissory note. He had many of those, tied together with a blue silk ribbon—obligations that remained in his desk only because he did not care to bring order in his papers. Suddenly he remembered them, and a cold shiver chased down his spine. Would it be necessary for him to waste time going through them? Old friends who had come upon hard days had been helped out of their troubles. . . . Often he had given them the money outright, especially if they amused him in one way or another, but it had also happened that he simply did not have the energy to say "No." It

was a troublesome word for one who had never been denied any of life's pleasures. It was a nuisance, though, that notes and such could haunt you for ten years. The baron had never troubled to employ a private secretary. Such people were so tiresome. He just let matters slide. If he had tried to define his life philosophy, he would have expressed it with, "After us the deluge." After us, of course. That he should ever get into deep water while he was alive, had never occurred to him. That Gabrielle wrote excited letters about dishonor, bankruptcy, and scandal—scandal, forsooth!—did not concern him in the least. That Herbert, his son-in-law, threatened him was uncommonly rude; such a tedious fellow, and as lacking in musical understanding as a county fair trumpet. He did not mind him at all.

But the banks were beginning to trouble him. Of course, he rather enjoyed pulling the noses of those adding machines. The troublesome part was, however, that they had such fine noses—hunting instincts that a hound might envy. Well, there was nothing to be done about it; everything was headed the wrong way. Cause and effect, he thought. It was like a railway embankment near which some farm laborers are draining a lake. The pressure of water against the embankment becomes less. If then a heavy freight train comes lumbering along in the critical moment, well, what of it? But if an excursion train speeds over the deceptive marsh—decked with flowers and tinkling with music—to the devil with the farm louts!

The children probably intended to dispossess him. By all means! The hundred-year-old house was not enough to cover the debts, they said. The mortgages did not suffice. They could hardly wait to sell it. Certainly not. Right-thinking people had to clear up all the misunderstandings. "Grandpapa" should not lack anything, they had promised him, and

people believed in their noble intentions. They were going to put him in a grand boarding house, equipped with all modern conveniences, a quiet home for old people. Stupidity! Nerve and brass! But when they in their wisdom had managed the whole thing, they could peacefully exclaim, like the Good Lord Himself, that they found everything very good. Because their fortune would increase, and they would receive the gold medal of public approval for their generosity.

Camilla came to open the door. She looked fresh and young in her dove-gray summer frock with wide, short sleeves. Her eyes welcomed him, before she found time to utter the words. His greeting in reply kissed the air around her, as he gave her the roses.

"A thousand thanks, Oscar-Fredrik. It is the literal truth to say that you are strewing my path with roses."

"I consider that a charming duty in my life, my dear Camilla."

"Oh, if only my children may have the joy of repaying your constant thoughtfulness! I can only say thanks, and sometimes that is not enough."

The baron's look under the heavy, gray eyebrows became sharp, uneasy, and inquisitive. Did she know, already, that this Arcadian peace was nearing an end? Did she want him to understand that now she would never more ask of him any of those delightful graces which he had been so happy to offer her?—never again suggest a motor drive, a boat trip, or a crayfish party in that enchanting *allegroma non tanto* of her voice? If she had been told, and perhaps in a brutal fashion, that the string was broken, it would hurt him more than anything else.

"But do come in, Oscar-Fredrik. Or, rather, out. I'm sitting on the balcony. A glass of Vermouth, or perhaps some black currant juice?"

"Thank you, no. Only your charming company for a little while."

"And a good chair. This one. I'll be back in a minute. I only want to put the roses in water. They are more beautiful than ever."

It may have been imagination, but he fancied that her voice sounded melancholy. Was she thinking of next summer? They had managed to be so happy just because they had been able not to worry about the next day.

She had left a half-finished letter when she had gone to open the door for him. It lay on the table, partly hidden by a leather portfolio. She had been afraid that it might blow down in the street. How lovely it was here! A free view over many green and fragrant gardens, and the blue tent of heaven above—not too far away, for Camilla lived three flights up in a modern house.

Beside the letter lay the fountain pen. "Lend me the quill," he had used to say, jokingly, when he had felt like writing out a check to her. And he used to hum, "I place all before your feet." Many times they had laughed at this. It had helped them to cover a certain embarrassment.

Whom was she writing to? Perhaps to Louise, the daughter. But about what? Mother and daughter always had much to discuss, of course. And yet, he should have liked to look at the letter. Did it tell about their "benefactor"? Did Camilla feel sorry for him? And what words did she use in that case? Pitying? No, it was unfair of him to suppose that.

Camilla came out. Her walk had that soft and gentle grace which is rare in these days, in spite of the schools for interpretive dancing. She shot a quick glance at the letter, and then she said, in explanation, "I was afraid my letter might blow away. I am writing to Louise. She likes London so much, but still she has her roots over here, so that all our little affairs interest her."

"Yes, indeed. Home, sweet home. One doesn't forget it. And Stellan? Breaking hearts in Ronneby?"

"I don't know about that, but he is quite well again. Perhaps I am unnecessarily cautious wanting to keep him in Ronneby. It is so expensive, and—it is not right of me to have accepted so much from you. Forgive me."

She bent down, and he felt her cool lips against his hand.

Quickly he withdrew it. The next second he had seized her slim wrists and kissed them with tender reverence. Then he carefully placed one of her arms around his neck, and sat motionless. At last he released the soft, white arm and asked in a voice which sounded strangely old and broken, "How much do you know of this mess, Camilla?"

"What mess? What do you mean?"

"Spare me from going into sordid details. Understand me, as always."

"Of course, it's mostly slander and gossip. It must be. But I am so sorry if we, if the children, have in any way caused—"

The baron straightened up. His deep-set eyes carried a malicious sparkle. His fresh red cheeks gradually purpled. Why should an old iron-ribbed bachelor's heart beat so violently with pain only because a mother instantly and without mercy thrust him to one side when it was a question of her children's honor?

A pause ensued between these two society people who else found a thousand animating topics for conversation. Camilla was leaning forward in her chair. Her worn but still beautiful face carried a pained, pitying, and embarrassed expression. The baron noticed it and suffered with her. At last he said slowly: "Everybody knows that I am delighted—that I have always been charmed to advance you a small sum—occasionally. But it is too absurd to believe that this has had any effect upon my financial standing. Not even the worst professional gossip-mongers could invent such a reprimand."

Camilla blushed happily. "Of course, I should have known it right away," she

exclaimed, "but I am so easily frightened. The scars of sorrow never disappear, and I thought of my husband. He, who was honor personified, would have suffered if the mere shadow of suspicion touched the children. I am not thinking of presents, but—" she lowered her voice, "the notes."

Again a pause developed, and the baron's features hardened. He looked withered, spent. He swallowed several times with difficulty. At last he said, "Don't alarm yourself about the notes. I mean, there is no reason for that. I give you my word of honor that I have—have burnt them."

She beamed and reached her hands to him. Not satisfied with that she rose and kissed him warmly on the forehead.

"No, Camilla, don't thank me. This isn't fair play. *Trop chère amie*, let us forget the evil of this world." He straightened up. "I have a suggestion. Why not improvise a little musicale at my home tonight? What do you say? Little Gunhild Borgander could sing ballads for us in the garden. I have not seen her in a long time."

"I believe she has her vacation."

"Yes, yes, that's right. She's staying here this summer."

"Dear Oscar-Fredrik, think of all the summers she has been abroad. She should be grateful."

"Do you think so? All my life I have done what pleased and amused me at the moment, but I am far from ready to recline on the couch of gratitude and meditate over my blessings."

Camilla's smile was a little forced. She seemed troubled.

"Well, what does the goddess say to my plan? Nectar and ambrosia, Erato and Euterpe, Bacchus, and Semele will illumine the feast. Doesn't that tempt you?"

"Yes, of course, but, I wonder—"

"Don't disrupt the moment with heavy thoughts, *belle dame*. I shall telephone to little Fanny Holm and some others—my

friend the bank president, the doctor, the mayor. "We are jolly musicians, and the whole world is ours." He rubbed his hand nervously, and rose.

"So soon? That was a short visit."

"*Au revoir* until tonight, then?"

"Yes, thank you. It was—it is always so delightful in your home. How many happy evenings and how much good music we have had there!"

"Taps sounding," said the baron with a grimace. Then he made his favorite gesture, extending his left hand in a wide sweep, and bowed in an old-fashioned manner, deeply and gallantly. Straightening his spare body, he held his head high and left the small apartment.

It was not true that he had burnt the notes. He had simply not given them a thought. But now he knew what he had to do. After the musicale tonight he would light the pyre. He walked straighter than usual, greeted the acquaintances he met with more than usual cheerfulness, and stopped to look with interest in the show-windows. He noticed that he, in turn, was regarded curiously by what he called *hoi polloi*, and that pleased him. Old ladies stared at him as if he were the devil himself. Even Beelzebub could attire himself flawlessly, and the baron's smart suit in grayish tan, his light-colored hat and cane with silver crook did not prevent them from trembling with fear. Squander a whole fortune! How terrible!

Of course, my dears, perfectly hair-raising. Earlier they had compared him to an Asmodeus, which was rather flattering. The great Paganini was suspected of murder done in jealousy, but the little amateur violinist had to content himself with knowing that his name was anathema in a fifth-rate Swedish town. He had also had other incarnations, a comet with a glittering tail of friends, a lion at balls, a race-horse owner. No gay party was complete without him.

In the busiest corner of Drottninggatan stood the blind man with the hid-

eous sign on his breast, "I Am Blind." He was decently attired and he did not beg, only held out his hand with some sheet music. In fact, he looked contented and well nourished, but he could not move from the spot. His wife had placed him there. Until she arrived he was forced to remain, probably afraid that he would not receive a few pennies before he was fetched and taken home.

The baron had seen him many times and never given him a thought, although now and then he had offered him a coin. Now he stopped and looked so long at the blind man that the unfortunate sensed it, and wondered. He stirred uneasily, coughed, and tried to free himself from the stare.

"How does it feel to stand like that and abide your fate?" asked the baron at last.

"My fate?"

"Well, your wife represents fate, more or less, when she comes to get you, doesn't she?"

"No, my blindness is my fate. If I could see, everything would be different."

"What would you do then?"

"Work, like everybody else. Take my stand in the ranks, if the expression pleases you, sir."

"It certainly doesn't. But on the other hand I do understand that it must be hell to depend, every day and hour, upon another person. Poor fellow! These songs, do they deal with your own experiences? No, I don't want them, but if you allow me I should like to recompense you for this little conversation on the art of living."

The baron always carried loose change in a pocket. Now he picked up three or four silver coins and gave them to the blind man.

Then he set out again, acknowledged greetings, said a few words in passing to some men he knew, and became irritated at an angry, asthmatic dog. The next moment he stopped to tease playfully a

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rosy, lace-bedecled baby and to regard seriously a newly erected building. He arrived home less distracted than when he left.

"The consul general has called up," Gustava informed him. "He said that he would probably arrive tomorrow."

"Indeed! So the beloved son-in-law is in the offing. I say, Gustava, we are going to have a Venetian feast tonight. Don't trouble your head with the foreign word. Only see to it that the food is superb, and that the colored lanterns are handy. Johan and I will take care of the wine cellar."

Johan was valet and chauffeur. That is, he had been until recently, because the baron had sold the automobiles a few days ago. In fact, he had begun to sell quite a few things. The rich collection of arms had lost many rarities. A Gobelin, a Turkish rug, and a signed clock from the eighteenth century had also disappeared. The money had not been deposited.

From the stairway the baron waved farewell to his departing guests. The evening had resembled countless similar entertainments. Music, song, good wines, inspired speeches, excellent food. The gentlemen had admired the arrangements of the *smörgåsbord*, the ladies had exclaimed over the game and the vegetables, and all had been fascinated by the garden, shimmering in moonlight and drenched in fragrance.

The parting farewell was perhaps not heartier than usual—it often became a veritable ovation after one of the baron's parties—but the host who remained long on the stairway while the silence of the night enveloped him, felt that the words had never sounded as enthusiastic as tonight.

Little Gunhild had sung as—yes, as if in farewell. She looked tired, poor girl. Music is life, but a music store clerk in a small town where gramophone records

and jazz tunes constitute the spiritual food must hunger in her soul.

Mrs. Fanny had enacted both Nitouche and the Merry Widow. She had the most scintillating humor, the enchanting dragonfly! Too bad her husband was such a heavy fellow! And Camilla. The baron repeated the dear name to himself. Certainly Camilla had been, as always to his mind, the queen of the party, but he noticed that she was not happy and at ease. She observed the other guests, and withdrew into her shell. She made him think of a locked jewel box. Locked to him. And somehow she had not quite trusted his statement about the burnt notes. At times her eyes flickered as if in fear. He had also surprised her at looking around his rooms, as if she were bidding them farewell. She had stood gazing, meditatively and yet absent-mindedly, as old people do when they fear a breaking-up. Yes, he felt the same way himself, but he wished that she had spared him the pain. And heaven be praised, she had nothing to worry about. She would regain her balance soon. She was one of those whom people handle with loving care, like an object of art. That he had been permitted to look after her so long was a confidence vote from Providence which he appreciated.

Everything that was to be burnt lay ready in his secretary. Small bundles of letters, loose yellowed sheets, rose-tinted notes, blanks, a number of forgotten messages which now flared up as if newly awakened in the fireplace. Camilla's notes were the first to be fed to the flames, and then the rest followed in one mass.

The baron sat leaning forward, enjoying the spectacle. "No, my dearly beloved children, you won't be able to dig into this. It could have been turned into plenty of money if my clever son-in-law's fine nose had got wind of it." Tomorrow the great man was scheduled to arrive. *Soyez le bienvenu!* At last the heaps of paper had become ashes, which moved ghostlike

on the hearth, rose and whirled about. The baron got up with a sigh, half of relief, half of regret. The gray remains represented a large part of his light-hearted, irresponsible, burnt-out life.

He had been sitting so long in one position that his back had become stiff, and it was difficult to straighten out. But he rose quickly and went with forced agility to his bedroom. He looked at his watch—not many hours to sleep. Not tonight, at least. Later on, perhaps.

How quiet it was! Only time moved audibly along, and he wondered whether the hands represented staffs or crutches.

From his dear garden, where his childhood had played, his youth romanced, and his later years had gathered new memories, came an intoxicating fragrance. The world's old shrunken heart managed, on a night like this, to clasp the love of summer, but not to hold it. Age cannot do that.

Early in the morning the baron rang and let Johan know that he intended to leave on the first train. Johan could pack

a few necessities in a bag, and the baron wanted to take his violin along. He could not leave an address. People were welcome to believe that he had run away. That did not concern him at all.

Shouldn't Gustava prepare breakfast?

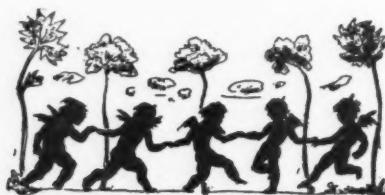
No, he didn't have much appetite after the party yesterday. "You see, Johan, this is the morning after the day before."

And what was Johan to say to the consul general?

"Well, most of all I wish you would tell him from me to go to hell, but I suppose you wouldn't deliver that message. Just tell him that the house is his."

Johan attended his master to the train.

There were not many travelers, and the baron thought that he had reached his compartment rather unnoticed. But close to the carriage door stood Gossip, grinning. This time she had arrived first. Slander had not yet awakened, and Virtue, well, she was up and about, but occupied with the housewives and tender mothers in the city's many excellent homes.



Sixteen Christmas Oxen

By JOHANNES BUCHHOLTZ

Translated from the Danish by LIDA SIBONI HANSON

THIS is a simple little story about some cattle. It is hardly worth telling. But since I haven't forgotten the incident myself, there may be other people who would care to hear it.

It happened at a large railway station in Jutland. The day before Christmas had been full of the usual exhausting bustle. As the afternoon went on, we began to despair of keeping things going. The trains were four or five hours late. They were not large enough to hold all the passengers, or if all had managed to crowd in, the engines could not pull the many cars. The vacuum brake gave trouble; the heating-pipes froze; it was altogether hopeless.

But about seven o'clock, things took a strange turn for the better. The overdue trains arrived, the passengers became amenable, the vacuum brake likewise. The almighty Christmas spirit descended on the tracks.

At eleven the old station master came down to the office where I was the only man left for the night, bringing wine and cake and asking me to act as host to the seven trainmen who were switching the morning trains outside. "See to it that the bottle is emptied," he said before leaving. So I called the men for a short Christmas celebration.

When that was over, I settled down to schedules and telegraph as usual. No—not quite as usual. For it was Christmas Eve.

Among the papers before me there was a bill of lading from Sweden. I glanced at it. Sixteen draft-oxen, going to a station way up north in Jutland. Well, well—sixteen draft-oxen—they had a long way to travel.

I took up the next paper.

It was during the war, and I had been told that some peasants in Jutland were trying to import draft-oxen to take the place of the horses that had been exported to Germany.

Some minutes later I was again fingering the bill of lading. Sure enough, sixteen draft-oxen.

In the lunch pause at midnight I went over to the workmen's room.

"I see we have a car with Swedish oxen. How are they looking, I wonder?"

The men thought they were probably looking as usual. Zoology did not seem to interest them very much.

"I'd like to know how long they have been without water and hay," I said. "The bill of lading says nothing about that."

The men's eyes twinkled. They puffed vigorously at their pipes and seemed to realize that it was Christmas.

"Where should we get hold of hay here in the middle of the night?" said one of them.

That was just it. With all around us sleeping their Christmas sleep, where should we get hold of some hay?

One of the youngest men left the room. A few minutes later he came back with a dozen sweet buns which he placed on the table before us with a grin.

"I thought I could get hold of some rye bread in the restaurant," he said. "But there was nothing except these buns. They were standing on the table in the waiting-room."

We took the buns and trudged across the tracks to the cattle car which was standing beside the platform. But we could do nothing from without. We could neither see nor reach the beasts through the railing. So we decided to take them

out. We put the runway in place and opened the door. A couple of men went in and untied the ropes, and the oxen came walking out foot by foot.

They were huge animals with horns as big as a man's arms. They did not seem anxious to gain their freedom, but stood huddled together under the arclight like a flock of dark slaves, gazing at us with their large, dull eyes. "Here we are—what are you going to do to us? Where is the yoke that is awaiting us?"

We held the buns before their muzzles. They sniffed faintly at them, then turned their heads without eating them. None of them seemed to care. Our feast was a failure.

"They can't be hungry, but let us try a pail of water," I said.

One of the men went for water, and as soon as he approached with it, the thralls began to show signs of life. One of them went towards him and almost took the pail away from him. It drank every drop and would hardly let go of the pail. The others crowded sedately around it.

We felt strangely elated, and began to shout in our joy.

"So that's what you want, is it? Why didn't you say so right away?"

We got hold of some more pails and began to romp like boys in our eagerness to serve the beasts. Our joy inspired us. Someone had the notion that now we could get rye bread, since the bakers began working at one. Two men ran to the bakery. Why hesitate? We were in high spirits, spoke Swedish to the oxen and called them *bror*. They did not answer, but one by one they lay down heavily in

the snow, and we understood that they enjoyed being our guests.

When finally the rye bread arrived, the real feast began. There were eight large loaves. First we broke them in two by striking them against an iron fence, then we split them lengthwise with a shovel. Thus each beast had two snacks, weighing two pounds apiece.

They accepted them with grandiose Swedish dignity. Not one of them was in any haste to begin; not one of them rose. Even if they were poor draft-beasts, they were not without manners. They sniffed critically at the unfamiliar food, nodded approvingly to each other, and fell to.

For a long while they munched and munched and we could see that it tasted good to them. While they munched the first piece, they stretched out their muzzles and sniffed at the next.

They looked strange as they lay there in the snow, almost like sea monsters floating on the surface of the water. They rocked their huge horned heads while chewing. We stood silently on the platform looking at them. For a while we felt some of the infinite patience of the beast during the vicissitudes of life.

When the last ox had stopped munching, we did not yet want to disturb them, but left them in peace for a moment. But then we began to feel sleepy and cold. We looked at our watches; it was late. So we said "Thanks for Food" in behalf of the oxen, and kicked them gently from behind until they rose and went into the car.

Then we returned the buns and went back to our work.





BIOGRAPHY

The Sibyl of the North, The Tale of Christina Queen of Sweden, by Faith Compton Mackenzie. With Illustrations. Houghton Mifflin. 1931. \$8.00.

Recently some able writers have with gleeful avidity seized upon the spinster queen as the most arresting subject for an ultra-fashionable biography. Queen Elizabeth has with biological exactitude—so it is claimed—and naturalistic mercilessness been exposed to the scrutiny of curious thrill-seekers, and whenever the whole truth could not be known the reader has been fed with suggestive speculations and bold, thinly veiled insinuations. Modernists have called it "debunking" history. Now it has become Queen Christina's turn.

Mrs. Mackenzie's work offers little that is new. Her object, it seems, has been to present rather well known facts in more lurid, iridescent colors than had previously been done, and to concentrate on the super-sensational elements, since Christina was almost always sensational. As a popular production it is not free from cynically pungent, unwarranted aspersions, but it is well written in a spirited, forceful style that retains the interest throughout. There was nothing dull either about Christina's restless life or her stormy petrel personality, and this has largely determined the character of the book. It is, moreover, a piquant narrative of startling events rather than any attempt to motivate or philosophize about those events, and all is abundantly seasoned with gossip and slander. The author's principal sources of information—the basic works in French by Baron de Bildt and Arckenholtz—were, we remember, employed by Francis Gribble in *The Court of Christina of Sweden*, 1913. Mrs. Mackenzie's picture of Sweden is not particularly flattering, and her reference to the "ignorant physicians of the North" is an unnecessary slur. Where were there any truly scientific doctors in the seventeenth century?

As for Christina herself, she remains an enigma of contrasts. An intelligent, learned patroness of arts and letters, with excellent training in statesmanship, she only rarely made full or prudent use of her ability or wisdom. Obdurately independent, she was vain, fond of display and regal pomp, but hostile to the routine of administrative duties. With or without a throne, she always insisted upon being conventionally honored as a queen,

though reserving for herself the right to dress and behave as she pleased in all places and under any circumstances. At times coarse, unkempt, and shocking, she was also kind, frank, and courageous. Her generosity degenerated into an inane extravagance, with constant financial trouble, and she remained incredibly blind to the plundering of her possessions by members of her foreign entourage. In frantic efforts to replenish her coffers she turned alchemist. She rode rough-shod over many distinguished foreigners, and sorely tried the patience of the Vatican, which was delighted, however, to shower her with gifts, triumphal processions, and other blessings; for it was worth while to capture and hold the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus.

Of course Mrs. Mackenzie dwells at length on Christina's alleged love affairs. She describes vividly the Queen's willful brilliance and activity at the Swedish court, her abdication of one throne and subsequent ambition to obtain another. The insane Hamburg incident of 1667, when Christina defiantly heralded her Catholicism to the Protestant world with fireworks and fountains of wine, is pictured in luminous detail. Bourdelot's influence stands out in shameless relief, and the execution (or murder) of Monaldesco is emphasized with ghastly realism. Behind it all we catch a glimpse of a perverse but suffering woman, born to command and be obeyed, now reverent and now irreverent, here feted and there hated, one moment presiding over an academy of artists and scholars, and at another pouring out her love for a cardinal. She dined with the Pope, presumably the only woman so honored. Truly, she was a remarkable human combination of cruelty, arrogance, humility, power, charm, stupidity, and genius.

ADOLPH B. BENSON.

Jenny Lind, by Edward Wagenknecht. With Illustrations. Houghton Mifflin. 1931. \$3.00.

We welcome this sympathetic but dispassionate picture of the Swedish singer who still, after so many decades, holds our attention and imagination with a kind of romantic spell. Mr. Wagenknecht has written a delightful, entertaining book; and on the basis of a greater number and variety of testimonials than have previously been brought together in one volume has essayed to analyze the cause of her unique success. In so far as a popular work can be scholarly—and it can be—the author has certainly achieved his purpose, and fourteen pages of bibliography, with notes and index, increase the practical value of the biography. The reviewer recommends it with something akin to enthusiasm. The portrait of Jenny Lind which it gives is probably as accurate as we can possibly obtain.

It is perhaps idle to speculate about what reception Jenny Lind would receive in our own time, but "to untold thousands of her contemporaries she typified the very highest in both the art and the womanhood of her day." This is an undeniable fact. Her presence was like a stimulating fragrance, an experience; and a careful study of first-hand critical estimates of her singing, whether favorable or otherwise, must lead to the conclusion that she was thoroughly musical. Possessed of a voice of exquisite timbre, "deliciously rounded," with an inexhaustible reserve and a marvelous ability for trills and pianissimo effects, and a range of two and three-quarter octaves, she charmed people of all classes on two continents, among them Chopin and Mendelssohn. Liszt is said to have disliked her because she drew too much attention—presumably away from him. And she held this attention. Walt Whitman objected to her because he preferred a deep masculine voice to any woman's, a fact which Mr. Wagenknecht does not mention. She was not a physical beauty, and her lung capacity was small, but she compensated for these drawbacks by expressive features, charm and grace on the stage, and careful breathing. Besides, there was a "certain irresistible wistful pathos" and spirituality about her singing and personality which appealed to all. She had a repertoire of thirty operas and did well in all parts that she really liked, though her interpretation was often radically different from that of other prima donnas. Though she suffered at times from stage fright, she had plenty of self-confidence.

But above and beyond the artist towered the woman. Jenny Lind's spotless moral character and her love for nature and humanity—the latter evidenced by her many acts of charity—are well known. She was not perfect of course. According to Wagenknecht, she had indifferent table manners, and was not a great social success. Proud, sensitive, temperamental, impulsive, and headstrong are some of the adjectives applied to her. But after all these do not represent very serious defects, and in the author's opinion the worst that can be said about her is that she was perhaps a little proud of her own humility. She was a church-woman of deep religious earnestness, brought up in the "repelling austerity" of the Lutheran Church and later nurtured in the "abominable Victorian pietism." If religion made her severe it was not wholly her fault, and although she felt prompted in part by religious motives to give up the theater and substitute the performance of oratorios for operas, she always remained broad-minded toward dancing, card-playing, and the theater. She regarded her voice as a gift of God and believed sincerely that it was He who guided

her career. In Jenny Lind purity, love, and artistry were harmonized to make an immortal priestess of the beautiful.

ADOLPH B. BENSON.

FICTION

The Wild Orchid, by Sigrid Undset. Translated by Arthur G. Chater. Knopf. 1931. \$2.50.

In this book Sigrid Undset returns to modern Oslo, the scene of her early stories. Here, as formerly, she deals with family life and is supremely interested in the relations of husband and wife, parents and children; but her types are more varied, and she shows us many more social strata in the town she knows so well. She has gained in power and brilliance of coloring, and there is a deeper intensity due to her religious faith which has more and more become the dominant factor in all her works.

In *The Wild Orchid*, as in her medieval books, the author shows the dissolution of what would seem a promising family, and traces the disintegrating influence to a sin that has been committed.

Paul Selmer's parents are divorced. His mother has imbibed the ideals of personal liberation that were current in Scandinavia in the 'eighties and 'nineties. She has left her husband because of incompatibility, and has by her own efforts built a new home for her children. On this woman Sigrid Undset has lavished every good gift of beauty, intellect, energy, proud integrity, and she has fused all these qualities in a warm and fascinating personality.

But it is not enough. It is the "wild orchid." There is a symbolical significance in the *gymnadenia*, the wild orchid which Paul and his mother plant in their garden one Sunday in Spring and which disappoints Paul so terribly when later he sees its frail insignificant flowers in bloom.

Paul himself plucks the flower of life with a beautiful girl of the people, whom he really loves and wishes to marry, but who leaves him and cuts herself adrift in a helpless sense of her own unworthiness. It is one of the most exquisite love stories Sigrid Undset has ever written, but it is the "wild orchid"—symbol of the transitoriness of human life, the uncertainty of human happiness.

Throughout the book the author is leading her hero gradually to a perception that he needs something beyond the ideas inculcated in him by his mother, that he needs to find his life on a religious faith. In the yet untranslated sequel, *The Burning Bush*, he comes to rest on a sense of the divine love.

It is the great distinction of this author that she transmutes spiritual experience into high adventure—the highest that life holds.

H. A. L.

By SIGRID UNDSET

The

WILD

ORCHID



SIGRID UNDSET

The first great novel of modern Norway by the famous Nobel Prize winner. Though Mme. Undset has turned from medieval days to the contemporary scene, she has written of the fundamental problems of love and religion with the same power and deep understanding that made *Kristin Lavransdatter* one of the most popular novels by a Scandinavian ever published in this country. In this story of Paul Selmer, a young man of Oslo, who tries to find some genuine meaning in love and life amidst the shifting values about him, Mme. Undset again displays her genius in portraying masculine character. The flower which gives the book its title is a symbol of earthly love. There will be a sequel, published in 1932, in which heavenly love will be symbolized as *The Burning Bush*. \$2.50

What some of the critics are saying about THE WILD ORCHID:

"Mme. Undset again reveals her ability in handling a large canvas and a variety of contrasted characters. She reveals also . . . her ability to treat human character in terms of its own particular age and background."—*The New York Times*.

"Mme. Undset's major powers are displayed in *The Wild Orchid*."—*The New York Evening Post*.

"The hero's love-story is told with sympathy, pity, understanding. He and his first sweetheart and his mother are all extraordinarily real and living human beings."—Dorothy Canfield.

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August, by Knut Hamsun. Translated from the Norwegian by Eugene Gay-Tiffet. Coward-McCann, 1931. \$2.50.

Our old friend August from *Vagabonds* returns in this book to Polden and brings modern progress to that sleepy little fishing village. August is to Hamsun the incarnation of the modern spirit. He gives Polden a post-office, a bank with a big safe, a factory, a seine-boat; but there are no letters in the post-office, no funds in the bank, there is no power in the factory, and no herring in the sea.

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August leaves Polden penniless and a fugitive from the law, but there is nothing tragic about him. We know that he will rise again like a bubble. The real tragedy is the life of his fellow vagabond "Big Brother" Edevert, who was cut out for a solid citizen and was decoyed into the empty futility of a rootless existence. Edevert, who was so good to his little sisters, and was such a bright lad and so clever and energetic, is blighted in the very essence of his being. When the lighter and frothier elements in Polden begin to recover from their attack of progress, Edevert is not there to share in the returning sanity. His life has been ruined beyond repair and is snuffed out.

There is much bitterness in Hamsun's social theory, but it is softened by his sympathy with the individuals however foolish and futile they may be, and by his scintillating humor which has never been more delightful than in his book.

Surf, by Knud Andersen. Translated by Grace Isabel Colbron. Century. 1931. \$2.00.

The Danish author Knud Andersen has been a deep-sea sailor. In *The Brand of the Sea*, the first of his books to be translated, he pictured with remarkable power the lure of the sea and the spell it casts on those who follow it. In the present book, *Surf*, he deals rather with the difficulties of the sailor in adjusting himself to the people on shore. Ture Vester is a rough seaman who starves and works himself up to become a ship's officer, but has had no time for the niceties of life. He marries a girl who demands of him that he shall comport himself creditably in society, and the real love which exists between them is put to a strain from which it does not easily recover.

The most attractive part of the book is the first, telling of Ture as a little boy in the fishing village with his mother. She tries to hold him back from the sea after it had taken the life of his father, but the traditions of the sea are in his blood and are only strengthened by the story of his father's courageous exploits.

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A delightful picture story-book for little children, in which are told the adventures of Jossie, the Rabbit, and Kurrie, the Squirrel. They are puzzled as to how to divide the berries, apples, cabbages and other good things they find, and finally go to school to learn how much two times two makes. Their amusing antics are set forth in large, black-lettered type with droll color plates throughout. It is an appetizing and appealing book for the kiddies.



Topelius, its author, is very well known in Sweden. The great versatility, the human qualities of his writings, have endeared him to all Scandinavians. Finnish by birth, Topelius has been styled the Hans Christian Andersen of Finland. His children's stories have been published again and again, and are generally used throughout the schools in Sweden.

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A Night of Death, by Marie Bregendahl. Translated by Margery Blanchard. Knopf. 1931. \$2.00.

This book deals with the events compassed within twelve hours in the life of a family on one of the big Jutland farms. It is a common enough story of birth and death, but told with fine and restrained art. The first chapter gives a beautiful picture of peace and comfort and plenty as the mistress of the farm, Anne Gram, is seen dispensing the afternoon "snack" to her large household of children, servants, and farm hands. An hour later the peace is broken, the children are sent away, the house is in confusion, and the mistress has entered upon the night of agony which adds one more to the group of children, but costs the mother her life. The story is told through the awakened consciousness of the older little girls who steal back to the house and watch the developments with mingled curiosity, fascination, terror, and grief.

JUVENILE

Kari. A Story of Kari Supper from Lindele, Norway, by Gabriel Scott. Translated by Anvor Barstad. Illustrated by Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday, Doran. 1931, \$2.00

In *Kari* we have a delightful story about a little girl in Norway. She is the daughter of a country doctor, a sturdy, lovable and lovely child, who likes to play out-of-doors hours on end dressed as a boy, who creates her own fairy tales and a make-believe world, and who yet finds her greatest pleasure in helping mother cook. We see her grow up, go off to a happy year in town at school, and return home to shoulder mother's burdens. In the background of the story are the good and wise parents, and it is a charming picture of family life that Gabriel Scott has drawn.

This is the first of this author's stories for children, long popular in Norway, to appear in English, and Anvor Barstad's translation reads very well. The drawings and decorations by Edgar Parin d'Aulaire have been happily inspired and contribute much to the attractive appearance of the book.

Two Times Two Is Four. Adapted from the Swedish of Zacharias Topelius by Vera C. Himes. Illustrated by Katharine Dewey. Thomas Y. Crowell. 1931. \$1.50.

The very young will enjoy this little tale, retold from Topelius, whose delightful stories and fairy tales have a perennial place on the children's bookshelves in the Scandinavian countries. They have also been adopted by boys and girls of other countries in translated editions. This new picture book tells the story of Jossie the Rabbit and Kurrie the Squirrel in charming colored illustrations and text that has been done in large black hand-lettered type.

(Continued on page 784)

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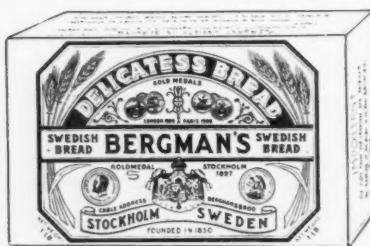
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TRADE NOTES

DANISH AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY MAINTAINED

Although the Danish farmer has been touched by the general business conditions both within and without the country, agriculture has managed to remain at a fair level during the past months. The total value of foreign trade declined, but this was owing to lower prices. During the first eight months of the year Denmark exported about 119,000 tons of butter, 249,000 tons of bacon, and more than 33,000,000 scores of eggs. These figures represent volume increases of 2, 32, and 17 per cent respectively over the corresponding period of the previous



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year. In spite of this large volume of business the Danish government is charged with instituting certain relief measures for the country's agriculture.

OSLO A CENTER FOR WHALING RESEARCH

As a result of conferences held in Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations eight countries have signified their consent to having Oslo become the central office for the proposed international research with regard to the whaling industry in all its aspects. This was the result of the argument brought forward by Foreign Minister Braadland, who showed that what the world wanted to know with regard to the conservation of the whale, etc., was explained fully in the Norwegian whaling law of 1929. The Norwegian government had previously emphasized the importance of all nations concerned working together, and had proposed that investigations should cover everything having to do with the origin, habitat, and general status of the whale in all waters. Cuba's representative in the League proposed that the research should include all living things in the seas.

SWEDEN GETS ORDER FOR ELECTRICAL GOODS FROM AFRICA

The Swedish General Electric Company, the ASEA, has received an order for electrical goods to be sent to the South African Iron and Steel Company for the electrical equipment of its iron fields. The contract stipulates that Swedish engineers and mechanics be sent to install the machinery.

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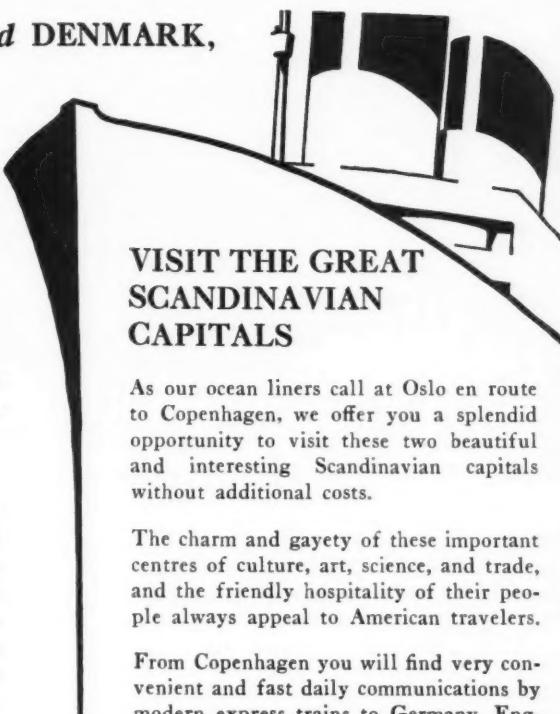
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June 17	June 18	Frederik VIII	July 2
July 7	July 8	United States	July 23
July 29	July 30	Frederik VIII	Aug. 13
Aug. 18	Aug. 19	United States	Sept. 3
Sept. 2	Sept. 3	Frederik VIII	Sept. 17
Sept. 22	Sept. 23	United States	Oct. 8
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SHIPPING NOTES

NORWEGIAN SHIPPING AND THE BRITISH GOLD STANDARD SUSPENSION

Norwegian shipowners are as yet unable to tell to what extent the suspension of the gold standard in Great Britain will affect their business, but they feel certain that where the charter-party stipulates payment in shillings it will automatically influence the revenue of their ships. The position, it is said, will be worse where vessels have been fixed for periods of considerable time. No list is as yet available of ships fixed on time charter with payment in British currency, but many of them are large tankers. In the case of those vessels, which formerly just managed to make both ends meet, there is expected a considerable loss.

SAILING VESSELS ALL BUT ABSENT FROM THE SEVEN SEAS

The gradual disappearance of sailing ships from long-distance routes has reduced their number to such an extent that at the present time they represent less than one per cent of the world's tonnage. The reduction since 1914 amounts to 2,500,000 tons. Of what still remains, the United States owns more than half.

AMERICAN SHIP COMPANIES MERGE INTO BIG COMBINE

The American merchant marine combine of the Pacific and Atlantic shipping groups has been announced by R. Stanley Dollar, vice-president of the Dollar Steamship Company, as composed of

this company's ships and those of the Roosevelt Steamship Company. The latter is interlocked with the International Merchant Marine. The Dawson-Chapman group is interested with the Dollar company. The value of the ships included in the merger is close to \$110,000,000. The five groups concerned operate twelve steamship companies under American and foreign flags. The fleet of the United States Line is to be kept in Atlantic waters. Inter-coastal services of the Dollar Steamship Lines and the Panama Pacific Lines are to be continued as at present, with non-conflicting schedules to be worked out, to avert overlapping.

SWEDISH-BALTIC NORTH ATLANTIC FREIGHT CONFERENCE

Important shipping companies in Sweden, Norway, the United States and Germany have organized the Swedish-Baltic North Atlantic Freight Conference for the purpose of facilitating and rationalizing wood-pulp shipments from Sweden to the United States. According to the *Swedish American Trade Journal* the companies are as follows: the Swedish America-Mexico Line, the Transatlantic Shipping Company, the Transmarine Company, the Helsingborg Shipping Company, the Wilhelm Wilhelmsen Company of Norway, the American Scantic Line, and the Unterweser Rederei, Germany. The new combine will have from twelve to fifteen sailings a month from northern Sweden to American ports. It is expected that the combination will prove an economic factor in the distribution of wood-pulp transportation.

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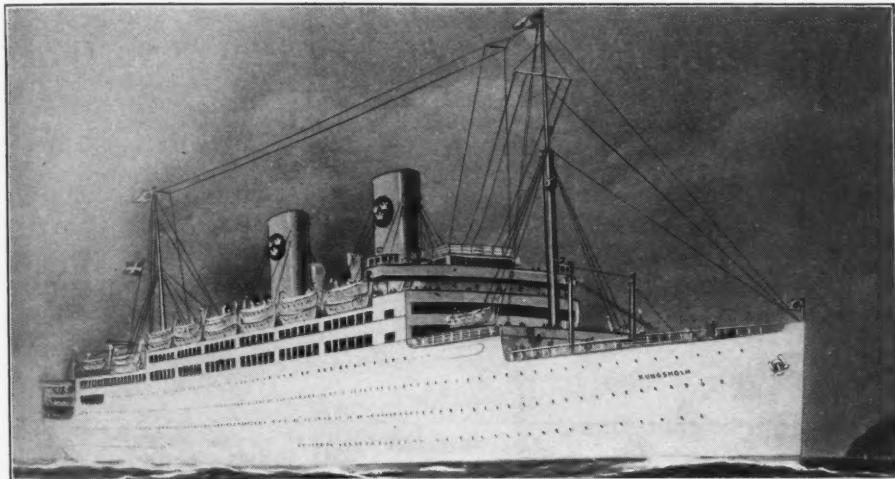
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(Continued from page 774)

Ekorn, by Haakon Lie. Illustrations by Kurt Wiese. A translation from the Norwegian by Claes Leonard Hultgren. *Laidlaw Brothers*. 1931. \$2.00.

A finely written story of a red squirrel, by a Norwegian government inspector of forests. The habits of squirrels and their neighbors in the woods are graphically told, and the vivid description of the forest's changing aspect from season to season makes a beautiful opening chapter.

The Coming of the Dragon Ships, by Florence McClurg Everson and Howard Everson. Illustrated by Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. *Dutton*. 1931. \$2.00.

This story of nine hundred years ago is laid in Iceland, Greenland, and Vineland the Good. It tells about a young girl, Gudrid the Fair, who later becomes the wife of Thorfinn Karlsefne and the mother of Snorre, the first white child born in America. The incidents and figures in the tale are largely historical, but they are given a setting portraying the everyday life of the age, and the bold adventures have been set down in a simple lucid style suited to young readers. The children will also enjoy Edgar Parin d'Aulaire's excellent illustrations in color and black and white.

Buddy's Adventures in the Blueberry Patch. Written and Illustrated by Elsa Beskow. Translated from the Swedish by Siri Andrews. *Harpers*. 1931. \$2.00

Here we have another beautiful picture book by Elsa Beskow, Sweden's favorite illustrator and writer of books for small children. Some half dozen of her lovely volumes have now come out in English editions; but long before they were translated American children eagerly pored over the Swedish originals, because the charming pictures almost told the story without the aid of text, though the artist tells a fine story, too, in a way that appeals to a child.

The Goat Who Wouldn't be Good. *A Story of Norway*, by Zhenja and Jan Gay. *William Morrow*. 1931. \$1.75.

A recital of the pranks of a mischievous goat has been given a background of Norwegian country life, with descriptions of many picturesque features which characterize it. There is the departure of the cows, sheep, and goats to the mountain pastures for the summer, work and play of many sorts, and a gay wedding as a climax. A few small inaccuracies have crept into the local color, but the gay and charming pictures and the simple telling of the story will make it pleasing to children from six to eight.

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